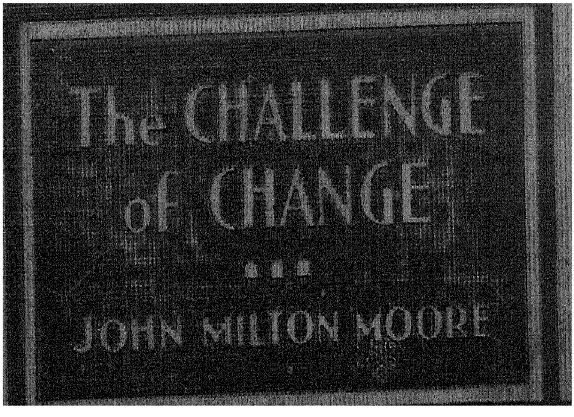
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of CHANGE
JOHN MILTON MOORE

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The Challenge of Change

The Challenge of Change

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN HOME MISSIONS

by John Milton Moore

AUTHOR OF *Things That Matter Most*

New York

COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS
AND MISSIONARY EDUCATION MOVEMENT

THE REVEREND JOHN MILTON MOORE, D.D., was graduated from Grove City College and from Crozer Theological Seminary. Following pastorates in Baptist churches in Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, and in Chicago, he became Secretary of the Department of Missionary Education of the Northern Baptist Convention. After ten years in this position he was called to the Marcy Avenue Baptist Church in Brooklyn, of which he was pastor from 1916 to 1926. In this period he served as member of the board of managers of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, as member of the executive editorial board of *An Outline of Christianity,* and as chairman for four years of the administrative committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Elected to the staff of the Federal Council in 1926, Dr. Moore was until April 1931 one of its three general secretaries, his special responsibility being the extension of state and local cooperation.

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AND MISSIONARY EDUCATION MOVEMENT
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To

Mabel Heffley Moore

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FOREWORD

THE North American Home Missions Congress held in Washington in 1930 proclaimed a conception of home missions far more vital and comprehensive than that which is commonly held. This volume is an attempt to carry the larger view to a larger audience.

For some earnest home mission workers, adjustment to the broader conception may be difficult. An address that was given at the meeting of a missionary society in a Western city dealt with issues like those treated in this volume. At the close of the meeting an auditor expressed to the speaker her appreciation of his address, but added, "It was all very interesting, but we thought you were going to speak on home missions." Whether or not the first part of this remark may be considered by any of its readers as applicable to this book, the author is quite sure that the second part will be. He pleads for patience and an open mind, believing that this treatment of home missions is fundamental, and just now desperately needed.

A leader in women's missionary activities who read and criticized the manuscript said of it, "This is a discussion not only of the problems to which any consideration of home missions was limited in the old

days, but of the problems upon the solution of which the growth and, I believe, the very existence of the Protestant church in America depends. It deals with the spheres of thought and action upon which hangs the destiny of the church for many generations." It has been suggested by other advisers that the treatment is too advanced for average study groups, but the author believes that such groups in the churches are sufficiently prepared for the moderate intellectual challenge which these pages may bring. A good deal of brave, hard, patient thinking is called for today if home missions is to rise to the level of Christian statesmanship which the new conditions in American life require.

Fully conscious of the limitations of this small volume in attempting to deal with so vast and difficult a task, the author sends it on its way in the hope that individual readers and study groups may find it challenging them to thoughtful and sacrificial devotion in the cause of Christianizing America. The task, as he has tried to show, is to be performed not alone by a few consecrated missionaries on far frontiers whom our offerings support. We must all participate, increasing our offerings, to be sure, multiplying our missionaries certainly, but supplementing all of this by a vital and intelligent service right where we live. Every American community is home mission ground today. Every local congregation is a missionary agency. Every church member is a missionary himself.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the many missionary leaders who have helped by reading and criticizing the manuscript, and to the Judson Press for giving permission to the author to quote from his earlier volume, *Things That Matter Most,* and from his chapter on "The Church in the Older Residence Districts" in *Church City Planning.*

March, 1931. J. M. M.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

CHAPTER I

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO AMERICA?

ALMOST everything has happened to America that the wildest visionaries were imagining a generation or two ago, and in addition innumerable other things quite unforeseen and unimaginable. Of course they are mainly things that have happened to the world. But the whirling center of this modern cyclonic disturbance that is remaking our institutions and systems and changing our ideals and ways would seem to be located somewhere between Halifax and San Diego, Vancouver and Miami. The America of last year seems out of date on January second.

What has happened? Only a revolution, that is all. The America of today is less like the America of Lincoln's day than that America was like fifteenth century Europe. In addition to the marvels of discovery and invention, which so soon become commonplace through a quick succession of still greater achievements, one comes upon things less tangible but more wonderful still to the philosophic mind. These include the breakdown of authority, the passing of Victorian standards and the rise of the larger lawlessness; the development of mass production, investment

trusts, and instalment plans; the experimental phenomena of electrons and radioactivity, the marvels of astrophysics and the startling work of Einstein; the influence of Bolshevism and Fascism, and a score of similar evidences of a new world of thought and action. If we are to have a really effective program and strategy for Christianizing America, we must take full account of new moral and social conditions. Only a revolution? *World Unity* reminds us that the overpowering significance of these times lies in the fact that the world is passing through not one but many revolutions—political, industrial, financial, scientific, religious, social and psychological. Take time to ponder that statement.

Let us pause for a story, three stories indeed, which appeared in adjoining columns on the front page of a metropolitan newspaper. Each deserved front page position on its merits, but it was their juxtaposition that gave them special interest. The make-up man was doubtless quite unaware of having provided that morning a preacher's firstly, secondly and thirdly.

"Three hundred years is one cosmic day," said the first headline. The American Association for the Advancement of Science had closed its annual session the night before with an address by Professor Harlow Shapley of Harvard. Our system of stars and planets is rotating, it appears. But that is not all. There are other galaxies, or universes as the professor called

them, probably thousands of them. Our own universe, with its calculated ten billions of stars and planets and comets, seems to be the largest, but perhaps that is because we are nearer to it. The size of these universes that drift through space like great floating islands of stars is naturally not easy to estimate, since they are so far away that it takes a hundred million years for their light to reach us—it is well known that light is no laggard. And so on and on, stars visible and invisible, of such size and at such distances that as we undertake to pursue them through space, paralysis of the mind ensues before we even reach the new planet Pluto, our own sister, only four billion miles away. Cosmic immensity is one revolutionary idea that has come in to change the thinking of the world, and it has demanded a thoroughgoing reconstruction of our ideas, terrestrial and celestial.

The second story was headed, "Two hundred million dollar plan to ease traffic strain." Down to earth we come with a crash—from sailing among the stars and the universes, we find ourselves dodging automobiles in New York. The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce has a plan, we discover, to divert seventy thousand vehicles daily from lower Manhattan. The plan requires miles of new roadway right through a densely populated section of the city; a tunnel, three new bridges, and two hundred million dollars. While one's mind is still under the spell of Professor Shapley's

universes, this all seems a little ridiculous. What are all these whirling wheels on a little crumb of a planet in comparison with the circling spheres? And yet for those who must drive or dodge these milling machines and are caught in the great machine system of which the automobile is a symbol, the stars in their courses are comparatively negligible. This is another thing that has happened to the world, and especially to America. Not alone are our methods of travel and our ways of living affected, but our very thinking and aspiring, and our sense of values. This story of everyday machine confusion throws much light on what has happened to America.

And now the third story. An anticlimax? On New Year's Day Carlo Gelati left his young wife Lena alone in their bare rooms while he went out to enjoy a dinner party. For six years they had been living together not too happily or prosperously. Who knows what experiences between them may have been leading to the tragic end? It is hard to be alone on a holiday; for Lena it was the last time. Here are a few sentences from the letter she wrote her husband: "I have put up with it and prayed God to help us and for better times. God forgive you for your meanness, and may he help you and protect you from all harm, for I love you in spite of all you've done. Good-by forever, my husband, but may we meet again in heaven. . . . It is now 5:30 and the gas is on and so I am

going to bed for my last sleep. Good-by again, and pray for me." This is stark personal tragedy, yet how significant is one life? "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?" What indeed, in the presence of the vast world system of motors and dynamos and the vaster systems of suns in starry space, is one life, struggling, hoping and praying against adversity, and at last in desperation going out to search in some other sphere for the happiness earth has denied? Inconsequential and futile is the fate of the individual, according to some philosophies now being widely proclaimed.

But not so does the teaching of Jesus appraise values. The circling spheres are themselves of no consequence apart from personality, and the wheels and the majestic system to which they belong will be judged and found worthy or wanting by what they do to personality. Most of those who hunger for fuller life and happiness do not surrender so tragically as did Lena Gelati, but the deep desires of human hearts do not greatly differ. Revolution in thought comes through scientific discovery, transformation of ways of living is wrought by invention, material prosperity builds a new earth. But ultimate human need persists through all such changes. It is the continuing element, the abiding constant, in our changing America. With the larger values that inhere in personality we are to deal in this

book. We shall be interested in changing external conditions as they help or hurt human lives, and shall count nothing foreign to the task or message of home missions that makes or mars personality.

Here, then, is the new world, and in it our new America, made new both in thought and in ways of living with a rapidity and thoroughness unparalleled in history. Whence arose this powerful stream of life and thought that is flowing through the modern world as the Mississippi rolls at flood time? Like that stream, it flows from a quiet and apparently inconsequential source—we shall not try to locate it. Somewhere back along the trail of human history an idea tarried long enough in someone's brain to register, was transmitted to other minds, and pursued a devious and more or less subterranean development. At last, practically in our time, it burst forth; and nothing, says Victor Hugo, is so powerful as an idea whose hour has come.

The Fruitage of Freedom

This revolutionary idea was the conception of personal freedom. Hitherto men had thought and lived as had their fathers. Custom was king, tradition was law, non-conformity was akin to treason. On the pioneers of the spirit who began to think for themselves and to depart from the old paths falls whatever praise or blame we feel for the world in which we live. Everything else followed and was bound to

do so. In the case of America, it was Columbus who became the symbol for this process. He revealed the existence of our continent, and thus made possible the beginning among the nations of a new type of national life, free from many of the limitations and traditions of European civilization. But he did more than that. Turning the eyes of the world from the East to the West, arousing men from their satisfaction with old achievements to undertake high adventure for vaster achievements, and making them forget the glories of the past in their eagerness to embrace the larger glories of the future, he changed the whole mental outlook of the Western world. Larger maps produced larger minds. And America became the central point in this incredible development.

A revolution in men's ways of thinking and living was inevitable, but who would have dreamed that it would go so fast and so far? With the freedom of the human spirit, the scientific method went hand in hand. Tradition began to yield to investigation. Old prejudices surrendered to the new spirit of inquiry. Ancient authorities, political and ecclesiastical, began to sit tremblingly upon their seats of power. The once vast and central solar system, of which our own planet had itself been the center, became a mere cog in an almost if not quite infinite cosmic machine. Only the eye of God could find the earth lost in the wide expanse of space.

To the changed ways of thinking which thus became current, changed ways of living were added through the marvels of steam, gasoline and electric power. These produced the most extraordinary accumulation and distribution of wealth and the most momentous change in human habits and outlook that history records. And it all came with startling swiftness. The sons of fathers who drove ox-carts at two miles an hour are making fifty miles by motor as a matter of course on wide, smooth roads, while their sons in turn nonchalantly sail over their heads in air flights which have been made relatively safe now, with a record for scheduled transport of more than a million miles for each fatal accident. So recent are these triumphs of science and invention that some of us who do not yet feel old remember how, as grown men and women, we experienced the thrill of our first telephone conversation. Others who are bearing full loads of adult responsibility cannot remember their first automobile ride. Children laughing with Amos and Andy can scarcely imagine a time when there were no radios. Is it any wonder that standards of behavior once thought to be ultimate measures of truth and duty went down along with other outgrown conventions, leaving mental and moral confusion? And is it strange if in this swift transition God has, for many, "been lost among the stars," and human hope and happiness have been ground up in our machines? Can there be

a more interesting or a more urgent task for home missions than that of protecting personality from its own achievements? Are our vision and statesmanship equal to the task?

But more concretely, what has happened to America? It is impossible, within our limits and purpose, to be inclusive in our answer, but some outstanding developments are clear.

The spirit of inquiry has captured the modern mind. Tradition is yielding to reality. Sam Walter Foss in "The Calf Path" humorously characterized the traditionalistic spirit of an earlier day by describing the path followed by a calf on its homeward way, taken up by a dog and later by a flock of sheep. This path in turn became a trail, a lane, a village street, a city thoroughfare along whose crowded ways "A hundred thousand men were led, By one calf near three centuries dead." The poet disavows any authority or right to preach, but adds this moral:

> Men are prone to go it blind
> Along the calf paths of the mind . . .

That is traditionalism.

Reality commands our thinking and guides our action today. We do not reason so confidently as an earlier generation did from premises to conclusion. "What are the facts?" is the question with which we challenge and are challenged. No man who has regard

for moral reality or for intellectual integrity will seek to evade this challenge. Hoary theories and even holy practices are commanded to halt and give the password before they may proceed. This is the ideal, however far we may yet be from its realization. It is true that the ultra-conservative spirit still prevails in wide areas of our religious thinking and activities. Like Peter when he was challenged to satisfy his hunger by partaking of food long held ceremonially unclean, there are many who, when called to moral and spiritual adventure, deem it a sufficient reply to say, "We never have done so." But we live in a world that is scrapping old machines for new and better ones, and exchanging outworn ideas and practices in industry, business, agriculture, education, medical practice, for those that are demonstrably more serviceable.

It is becoming more and more apparent that the spirit of traditionalism must yield in the religious sphere also, or the agencies and instruments of religion will prove to be hopelessly out of date and ineffective. This is not to say that the old must always be supplanted by the new; frequently the old is better. It is simply to say that an idea or an organization that has any chance of flourishing now must have more than age to commend it. A practice must have more to support it than the assertion that we always have done the thing in that way. The influence of the spirit of inquiry, the scientific method, has been

pervasive and revolutionary. From it have come increased knowledge, wider freedom, enormous wealth and stupendous power, affecting every individual life, challenging every social institution, conditioning every idealistic movement. It is a new America in which home missions finds itself working today, whether we will have it so or not. The Christian movement must adjust itself to changed and changing conditions, a far from easy task for institutions that are essentially cautious and conservative.

Knowledge has revolutionized life. When the spirit of inquiry established its right to operate in the minds of men, it was like the building of a road into an unknown area of unlimited natural resources, or the sinking of a shaft into unexplored and exhaustless mineral wealth. It was, in fact, the discovery of a new world. For God had hidden a million marvelous secrets in his creation, and when once the mind of man was set free, it began seeking with such zest and with such sacrificial devotion that the quest in itself immediately became rewarding. Enthusiasm for inquiry not only did not flag after early conquests, it was greatly intensified by the discovery that every advance has opened new and larger fields for exploration. The things we marvel at have multiplied beyond belief, only to find us still standing on the edge of the domain of human knowledge which we are more and more determined to possess.

The passion for education possesses us. A free public school system, democratic and non-sectarian, was felt from the first to be essential to the realization of American ideals. Not only has illiteracy been greatly reduced, but there has been put within easy reach of those who may not go on to higher education in the schools, extraordinary facilities for increasing knowledge by other means. Through a multiplicity of books and newspapers and magazines, through extension courses on every conceivable subject, through the radio and the moving picture, through men's clubs and women's clubs, through societies learned and not so learned, authors and speakers and teachers run to and fro and knowledge is increased.

Inventive genius has used the new knowledge to produce and multiply the machines that have transformed our habits of living. The industrial system and the machine civilization that have come out of the workings of applied science constitute in their magnitude our chief source of economic and national strength. In the delicacy of their balance and in the issues concerning human personality that they have created, they give us the greatest concern for our social and national security. For while we know much about the laws of chemistry and physics and economics, and through this knowledge have wrought wonders in the production of goods and resultant wealth, we know little as yet about the human factors involved. Ap-

parently we have not been much concerned to know about them. Scientific research has not yet been widely employed in the important field of human relations. Social and industrial psychology have a contribution to make that is desperately needed. The old Greek injunction, "Know thyself," and Pope's classic line, "The proper study of mankind is man," are of urgent importance in our day. And this regard for men is not only good morals and religion, it is the most practical kind of business sense. An industrial system that is technically perfect at every point in its use of raw material and in its facilities for marketing goods, may end in disaster if it forgets that personality is both its most valuable factor and its chief end of existence.

A large automobile factory declared dividends amounting to nearly a million dollars for the same period during which it had discharged or underpaid thousands of its employees and thus had forced many to find the means for existence through charity. When one's imagination enables him to visualize the tragic desperation brought about by such a plight, one is filled not only with pity for the particular men but with concern for the future of the industrial system. When one hears an outstanding manufacturer say that if we had applied to the problems of unemployment as much intelligence and effort as we have applied to the development of new machinery, and when one pictures what might be accomplished through patient

and persistent research and experimentation in the field of human values, it stimulates hope that the angels will yet win in the still doubtful race between education and catastrophe.

> Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell.

We cannot know too much, but to have knowledge alone is not enough. Someone has proposed that more care should be exercised in the choice of those who are to receive public education. It is suggested that in addition to intellectual requirements of admission to college and university, there should be equally high and rigid moral requirements. Why give higher education, at least at public expense, to those whose moral standards are so low, and to whom selfishness and greed are such dominant motives, that by the very cultivation of their brilliant mental gifts they are made more powerful and dangerous enemies of public welfare? If knowledge is used without fear of God or regard for man, it can release forces that will destroy the civilization it has created. Is our Christianity sufficiently Christian to save America from the misuse of knowledge?

To knowledge has been added more freedom. While it was the new freedom of the spirit that brought the method of inquiry to birth, the scope of freedom itself has been immensely enlarged as a result

of knowledge expanded through inquiry. Our own times have seen the removal of many age-old limitations from the spirit of man, with momentous practical consequences. Not only the divine right of kings but the divine right of churches and parents and schools seems to be passing today. We are rapidly escaping from the bondage of superstition and ignorance, to the displeasure, of course, of all those whose success in education or politics or religion is conditioned upon the exploitation of ignorance. We are free to move up and down the surface of the earth by swift processes of transportation, and the foreign tourist trade as well as our crowded motor highways bears testimony to the exercise of this freedom. Not only do we go everywhere in our hectic modern wanderlust, but, with a fluidity never before known, vast masses of the population gather their belongings together to shift them en bloc and establish a new home in some distant place. The freedom of women in political and economic and social life is so well established that we scarcely realize how recently it arrived, though we are witnessing daily its social consequences.

The greater moral freedom of children and young people as well as of adults, particularly since the war, is significant. High school young people coming home from the still later supper that followed the too late dance are a disturbing factor in the lives of parents. The serious thing about it is that they appear quite

incapable of understanding why they should do otherwise. To be sure, mother and father may have behaved differently when they were young, but what does that have to do with it? Every "Thou shalt not" of today is challenged by a frank and fearless "Why?" Freedom to think for oneself, to demand a reason beyond that of authority or convention or tradition, is now regarded as an inherent right, and this fact must be reckoned with by every individual or institution that assumes to teach or to guide.

Thus freedom is both a precious and a dangerous thing. Its value and the price at which it was purchased are so great that we are ready to take serious risks to insure its continuance. But liberty does often degenerate into license, alas, and there are many protests against legitimate social restraint that are made in the name of freedom. Particularly is this true of the growing lawlessness that baffles us and threatens the very existence of self-government. Starting with a legitimate questioning of custom and tradition which the spirit of inquiry made inevitable, it has developed in the direction of disregard of all law and custom, however previously effective and beneficent. This generation is letting itself go with reckless abandon. In our protest against conventions that hamper and regulations that go to extremes, we run the risk of losing sight of the eternal fact that all life is guided by law.

The widespread violation of the prohibition law and the condoning of such violation by those in high places of social and political influence is a striking example. Lax moral standards in literature, on the stage, and in motion pictures, bold and immodest habits in dress and demeanor, sex license, the decline of home influence, are all grave symptoms of moral breakdown. The extent of the divorce evil, showing an increase in divorces per 100,000 of the general population from 113 in 1916 to 163 in 1928, and the chronically high crime rate (it may be noted that in America one stands sixteen times as much risk of being killed by his fellow-man as in England, six times as much risk as in Canada, and twice as much risk as in Italy), are additional expressions of the so-called freedom that must be reckoned with by every welfare agency. But though freedom's name is being invoked to justify a money-mad, sex-obsessed, pleasure-intoxicated generation, the answer is to be found not in the denial of freedom, but in that combination of freedom and restraint which can be won only through patient experimentation and an elevated moral purpose. To this task religion, education, and statesmanship must all contribute.

Make a searching examination of your own life, your own home, your own nation. Is liberty getting the better of self-control? Is self-restraint surrendering to the demands of self-will? Is contempt for

authority sapping strength of character? Is our Christianity sufficiently far-sighted and sacrificial to deny present and transient gratification for the sake of future and permanent good? Are our churches and missionary organizations brave enough to be fully Christian?

America has become the richest nation in the world. In 1880 our national wealth was estimated at 43 billions of dollars, in 1925 at 355 billions. Current income increased between 1913 and 1928 from 32 billions to nearly 90 billions. This enormous increase of wealth has subjected the nation to all the tests and temptations of the newly rich. For this vast wealth we are again indebted in part to the spirit of inquiry, which through research and invention gave us the machine. Into its hoppers we pour our natural resources to be ground up into dollars by the millions of industrial workers who, with their dependents, constitute so large and significant a part of our population.

There can be no question that the wealth of the United States is an instrument not only of incalculable service for good but of terrible potency for evil, creating at least as many problems as it solves. Chief among such problems is the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few men, and the tremendous consequent power that those few men wield. Thirteen per cent of the people today possess ninety per cent of the wealth. And yet it is fair to say that wealth has been

distributed to a degree that at least makes possible the operation of twenty-six million automobiles, not all of them owned by rich people, and millions of radios which are bringing their music and messages into relatively humble homes. To such distribution of wealth as has been made we owe also the vast expansion of our manufacturing interests. And yet it remains true that this problem of the effect of concentration of wealth in the hands of a few is far from solution.

In its Labor Day message for 1930 the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America dealt with "Religion in a Machine Civilization," and discussed the evils of an inequitable distribution of the wealth that the machine has made possible: "The belief that the mere increase in wealth would benefit equitably all portions of society has proved to be mistaken. The great machine overcomes some limitations in modern society, but it accentuates others. . . . Its high productive capacity has created wealth. . . . The wealth it has created has flowed in undue proportion into the hands of those who own the machines. . . . Furthermore, the machine, by transferring skill from the worker to the instrument, has placed a premium upon youthful stamina rather than the experience of age. The result is that middle-aged men find it increasingly difficult to secure employment, and men over fifty-five find it equally difficult to hold

positions. No more serious charge can be made against our generation than that it has been socially so blind and morally so callous that it has been unwilling to divert sufficient profits of modern industry in order to store up reserves for the protection of the unemployed and the security of the aged."

The machine makes money, but it kills jobs. It may later make more jobs, but the period of adjustment is a desperate one for those whom the machine displaces. The Secretary of Labor recently stated, "Our manufacturing industries are turning out today twenty-five per cent greater volume of production with three and a half million fewer workers than they needed only a few years ago." This means that automatic machinery becomes the permanent element, with human labor a transient convenience to be employed or cast on the scrap heap as the profit motive may dictate.

Here again the light is beginning to break through. What only a few far-sighted students of economics, considered radicals in their day, were emphasizing a decade ago, captains of industry and outstanding statesmen are emphasizing today—that the distribution of the products of industry depends upon the buying capacity of the average man. Unless there is a secure and reasonable distribution of income, there is no adequate market for an increasing output of goods. A declining wage scale is thus seen to be the best possible

aid to general financial depression and hard times. The machine cannot stop running without bringing disaster and death to half the population. It cannot be kept running without purchasers of its product. And how shall they buy who lack the wherewithal? It is not John Smith and his family alone who suffer when Smith's wages are reduced or he is laid off. His butcher and his grocer feel the effects; his church contributions or his trade union dues are involved. The people who sell automobiles, radios, entertainment, clothing, all share in his misfortune. Ultimately, as when a pebble is dropped into a pool, the circles of disturbed economic life widen to include the whole. And since it is first or last the concern of all, it ought to be accepted as the responsibility of us all to see that the whole economic system, of which we boast as the cause and source of our national wealth and prosperity, be critically examined and revised as to the welfare purposes it pretends to serve and the way it actually works out. Happily we are able to report that a quickened conscience is showing concern that a fairer system shall be evolved. What moral leaders are demanding as right and labor insists upon as fair, representatives of capital are finding to be both wise and necessary, not only for the sake of human values but for economic reasons as well.

Perhaps for us the gravest problem that wealth creates lies in the fact that prosperity often brings out

qualities in individual and social life that reflect seriously upon religion and the church. Its effect upon Jewish groups, for example, is not unlike that sometimes noted among Christians. A socially minded rabbi reports how his friend the rabbi of a wealthy Reform Jewish congregation was reprimanded by his board for "too much visiting of the poor." In the light of traditional Jewish group loyalties and thousands of years of common suffering and sympathy, this indicates a tragic effect of modern life upon deep-seated standards and values. The writer remembers hearing the president of a Protestant church board of trustees, a prosperous manufacturer, speak with something like a sneer concerning a pastor whose ministries had brought in so many of "the Lord's poor" as to threaten the crowding out of "the Lord's rich"—a still more tragic denial of the very genius of the Christian gospel. It is the widespread enjoyment of material goods in which so many of us share that makes the great god prosperity all the more popular and powerful in American life.

Indeed there would seem to be complete historical justification for Jesus' grave utterance, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven. The late Professor Simon N. Patten of the University of Pennsylvania declared his belief in some kind of law that governs successive phases of civilization. He noted what many others have pointed out,

that no civilization in history has ever been able to prevent decadence and downfall, and stated his theory that each and all passed out of what he called a "pain economy" into a "pleasure economy." When struggle is no longer necessary, when comforts abound and discipline declines and pleasure becomes the goal of endeavor, moral stamina, which thrived under adversity and effort, grows anemic and flabby and social decay ensues. It evidently takes high moral character in men or nations to endure prosperity and escape "the deceitfulness of riches." This is a problem that no previous generation has yet solved. It is pressing upon America with an urgency and a menace for which there may be no historical precedent. It conditions all our missionary work. Minor victories won will be of small consequence if we lose this major conflict with "the principalities of this world."

When, at the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council, Mr. R. H. Tawney declared, "You cannot at once preach the religion of Christianity and practise the religion of material success, which is the creed of a great part of the Western world and is the true competitor of Christianity for the allegiance of mankind," he was penetrating to the very heart of the problem. For the first time in history the ideals of civilization have come under the dominance of business men. This is a fact, though not necessarily a menace; most of us would doubtless prefer to have

it so if the choice were between the present rule and a return to the times when priests or feudal lords were the people's sovereigns. But that mythical choice should not blind our eyes to the actual perils which we face. Business has gone a long way toward capturing science and harnessing it to the profit motive to serve its cause. It has tended to deal with men as though they were machines. Some of the results of this policy are the massing of multitudes in cities, the breakdown of the home, and the exaltation of material prosperity as life's chief goal and good. The success code is capturing the minds of our young people. Possibly we are developing a civilization for which our institutions were never intended. This is pointed out by Dean Roscoe Pound of the Harvard Law School in a statement that has immense significance for idealistic institutions such as the church and the school: "Our institutions presuppose a stable, home-owning, tax-paying population of which each individual has and feels a personal interest in its legal and political institutions and bears his share in the conduct of them. Irregularity and discontinuity of employment and consequent migration from city to city or back and forth between city and country, preclude the sort of society for which our institutions were shaped." If this be true, we ought to consider which we prefer to change, our national institutions or our national ideals.

The financial collapse witnessed in the autumn of

1929 and the continuing depression that followed in 1930 and 1931 has given a severe jolt to our national complacency. What the outcome may be, what lessons we are to learn from it, what changes it may bring about in our national temper and economy, the future will record. Like the World War, it issues its warnings and offers its demonstrations of the folly and futility of a selfish materialistic civilization.

Again we are in the midst of flashes of lightning that may strike near home. How much are you in bondage to things? What place has the spirit of speculation in your financial plans? How far do the ideals of Christian stewardship control your method of acquiring and using money? How fully do you respond to the Master's warning about the dangers that go with the pursuit of gain?

America wields enormous power. Knowledge is power. Freedom releases power. Wealth is the symbol and instrument of power. Such a combination of these three elements civilization has never before known. In the possession and exercise of physical and financial and political power, the United States stands in a position of unassailable supremacy. Its sources are found in the original endowment of our land by nature, in the character of our people, and in the development under Providence of the scientific forces that are shaping modern life. Look at the economic resources on which our civilization rests; a wide

domain, with abundant room for expansion, a climate stimulating and varied, a rich, fertile soil bearing large forests and containing almost every kind of mineral, besides lakes and rivers of oil—all these were here waiting to be subdued to human use.

Both the earliest settlers and those that poured in through later years brought great and varied gifts of brain and brawn. The application of these gifts resulted in the development of waterways, railroad systems that reach to every part of the continent, factories made productive through superior equipment and management and intelligent labor. Here, as Mr. Will J. Durant says in *Mansions of Philosophy,* are "inventors better organized and more enterprising than anywhere abroad, explorers and aviators writing epics and lyrics in the air, investors holding out their gold and begging industry to use it, a government at last wedded to science and rising to statesmanship." The result is power enough to enrich and perpetuate our national life through long centuries by wise social control, or to destroy it within decades by anti-social abuse.

Let us consider for a moment the release and control of physical energy which has produced our modern world, remembering that the United States, with less than six per cent of the land surface of the globe and about the same proportion of the population, produces 38 per cent of the world's coal, 70 per cent of its oil, and develops 38 per cent of its electric power.

The story of man's experimentation with and application of the physical forces of nature is one of the most fascinating in the history of civilization. Indeed, what we call civilization became possible only as man learned how to harness physical forces and make them work for him. The cave man knew only the power of muscle; that is why he was a cave man. Later he learned how to transfer some of the burden of labor from his own shoulders to those of the ox and the horse. It was a long time before he became wise enough to make wind and waterfall do his work. And all the time that he was in need of fuel, just under his feet was coal in abundance that would have kept him warm. Within sight of the place of his back-breaking toil was a cataract that would have done his bidding. The very air that he breathed was full of that force which we call electricity. Its manifestations in the lightning terrified him without giving him the slightest aid in the task of making the earth support his life and provide for his comfort.

Less than two hundred years ago man began to learn how to use coal industrially, and the result revolutionized the world. It was the use of coal in making steam and generating electricity, along with the invention of our marvelous modern machinery, that resulted in the unbelievable wealth of the modern world and the multiplication of comforts and luxuries beyond the wildest imaginings of the boldest minds of

a half dozen generations ago. Oil has followed coal, and the need of oil and of controlling the areas where it is found is conditioning today the conduct of the nations. Many thoughtful men pray that no new sources of power may be discovered before men learn how to use for the common good the vast energies now available to them. Abundant power is needed, but it is moral power that the world needs most, power of self-control and conscience and good-will.

Consider America as an international force. Comparatively speaking, the United States is still young. Furthermore, the greater part of our relatively brief national span has been lived under the influence of a simple agricultural civilization and in comparative isolation from the old world. It was at the close of the Spanish American War that we discovered that we had become a world power. Our trade relations have extended to bring us into contact with the ends of the earth. Our discovery of the possibilities of mass production and our passion for efficiency have changed not only the standard of living but the very structure of civilization. Today we find ourselves with a financial supremacy that compels us to assume economic responsibilities in the life of the world for which we are not fully prepared. The World War left us in a place of unquestioned leadership, and at the same time challenged us to accept political responsibilities in an international interdependence of which we

are by tradition afraid. We wield a power that affects human life in every part of every continent, a state of affairs which makes us the most envied and perhaps the most feared nation in the world.

That friendly and discerning French scholar, Professor André Siegfried, who has analyzed our post-war life in *America Comes of Age,* points out a significant aspect of our new vantage point. If true, what he says should be of the deepest concern to those whose hope for the future rests upon Jesus' gospel of the worth of personality. The American people, M. Siegfried declares, are creating on a vast scale an entirely original social structure; it may even be that we are introducing a new age in which Europe, no longer the driving force of the world, is to be relegated to a niche in the history of mankind. The war brought this process to a head when it "installed the United States prematurely in an unassailable position of economic supremacy." While Americans take pride in all this, it brings only heartburning and regrets to Europe. The point is that Americans are working toward the single goal of production; that our society is organized to "produce things rather than people, with output set up as a god." Concentrating as we have been, especially in the last ten years, on the problem of obtaining the maximum efficiency from each worker, we are sacrificing the individual in the process. Europe "squanders her man power and spares his

substance, but America does exactly the reverse." We may be establishing a civilization so enamored of efficiency and production that the individual is himself swallowed up in the mass, his personality stunted, and his soul enslaved.

Professor Siegfried may prove to be wrong in his prophecy, but he has pointed out a danger from which America and the world can be made safe only by such moral and social restraint and wise use of power as Jesus would be seeking if he were repeating in America today his teaching ministry of nineteen hundred years ago in Jerusalem and Galilee. In the nineteenth century science alarmed us by what seemed and proved not to be a formidable danger to religion. In the twentieth century we have been similarly and perhaps even more deeply concerned over the challenge to things spiritual of the "power age." Home missions will help to decide whether we shall master the machine or whether it will enslave us. The church must have courage enough to challenge the whole system, and wisdom enough to declare its conviction as to what Jesus would think of it.

The Challenge of Change

The people who will read this present book are interested in missions. They would present America to Christ as a nation whose God is the heavenly Father, whose law is love, whose ideals are peace and brother-

They face the facts and know. . . . I broke the chains of bigotry and despotism. I made men free and equal. . . . I have touched the summit of history. I did for mankind what none of you did before. They are rich. They are wise. They are free."

The Spirit of the First Century broke the long silence that followed. He told how they all had at first spoken proudly of their achievements, but now sat in shame and guilt as they recalled what had gone before and what had followed after them. Has the redemption of man really come at last?

"You have made men rich. Tell us, is none in pain with hunger today and none in fear of hunger for tomorrow? . . . You have made men wise. Are they wise or cunning? Have they learned to restrain their bodily passions? . . . You have set them free. Are there none, then, who toil for others against their will? . . . You have made men one. . . . Do men no longer spill the blood of men for their ambition and the sweat of men for their greed?"

As the Spirit of the Nineteenth Century listened, his head sank to his breast.

"Your shame is already upon me. My great cities are as yours were. My millions live from hand to mouth. Those who toil longest have least. My thousands sink exhausted before their days are half spent. My human wreckage multiplies. Class faces class in sullen distrust. Their freedom and knowledge has only made men keener to suffer. Give me a seat among you, and let me think why it has been so."

The others turned to the Spirit of the First Century. "Your promised redemption is long in coming."

"But it will come," he replied.

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The others turned to the Spirit of the First Century. "Your promised redemption is long in coming."

"But it will come," he replied.

The twentieth century has already exceeded the marvelous record of its predecessor, with seven decades yet to go. But after thirty years of experience with advancing knowledge and freedom and with increasing wealth and power, what has it to report of increase in appreciation of moral values, in growing regard for and expression of beauty and goodness and truth?

An honest and courageous answer to this question, such as this book tries to give, need not plunge us into pessimism, but it cannot possibly justify an easy optimism. It calls for immensely increased home mission wisdom and devotion. Moreover, it will drive us directly to a higher and greater source of wisdom and strength, the Holy Spirit of God. We shall realize anew that it is not by might nor by power, not by wealth nor education nor organization, but by this Spirit that America will be saved.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO HOME MISSIONS?

AT THAT point in the city at which the present writer frequently takes a subway train, there appears flowing down the tunnel track a gentle stream. Far beneath the level of the street this little stream tells a story of life persistent in spite of change. In the days of old New York there welled up at what is now the corner of Twenty-third Street and Fifth Avenue a sweet cool spring whose waters flowed merrily to the river. Fish swam in its shady pools, and little children waded barefoot in its sparkling waters. Times changed; men with picks and shovels came to dig cellars and build foundations. But the little stream, choked and soiled, burst forth and flowed on. They came again with dynamite and steam shovels and pierced the rocky foundation of Manhattan still more deeply, excavating basements and sub-basements for the huge skyscrapers that now stand, and the little brook was buried and still more polluted. But it flowed on. The subway came, still further to disturb and divert its flow. The engineers must always reckon with the little stream. It flows on. They cannot silence its voice, they cannot check its flow. They turn

its waters into the sewer, through whose polluted passages it finds its way to the cleansing ocean.

It is a parable of life. Civilization has been builded and rebuilded through the ages. It is again being recreated in our own time. As men and machines proceed with their noisy and confusing operations, many old springs of life and peace and contentment are choked and befouled, and their water courses diverted to new channels. But one precious thing persists. It is human personality, the crown of the whole divine creative purpose. And it will persist, in spite of the influences that corrupt it and that check and change its course. Like the little stream of old Manhattan, it will find its way at last to the cleansing source from which at the first it sprang, to renew itself in the life of God. To protect and preserve and enrich personality is the supreme test of the churches, as it was the first concern of their Master.

The Course of Organized Religion

Having traced some significant changes in the broader life of America, we turn now to the consideration of its higher life as it has found expression through the churches.

The large place that religion had in the earliest settlement and later conquest of the American continent has been the church's glory. From Columbus, kneeling on the shore of San Salvador, through the Pilgrim

and Puritan founders of New England, the Quaker conquerors of William Penn's woods, the heroic Jesuit priests who penetrated the central West, to the intrepid Marcus Whitman in his covered wagon crossing plains and mountains to distant Oregon, pioneer churchmen in America wrought righteousness, obtained promises, and wandered in deserts and mountains like the ancient Hebrew heroes of faith of whom they are worthy spiritual successors. The Christianity they sought to establish found expression for the most part in the forms in which it had been transported across the Atlantic. The result was the development of strong and competing communions of Baptist, Roman Catholic, Congregational, Episcopal, Friends, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Reformed churches. It is an interesting story, and one that is completely interwoven with the strands of political development in the fabric of early American history.

Thus religion has found organized expression in American life, in its strength and weakness, in its wisdom and folly, through good report and evil report, sometimes challenging the times in terms of eternal truth, sometimes, alas, compromising eternal truth at the behest of the spirit of the times. But religion continues to be a mighty factor in our national life, and the best hope of those who believe that the hurtful and inhumane elements of civilization will yet be subdued to the ideals of the kingdom of God.

In an illuminating sketch of American Protestant home mission history, Dr. William R. King has indicated four distinct chronological periods. The first three cover approximately a century each, the fourth a generation. In these four epochs home missions are seen to be something quite varied in character and method, if not indeed in aim.

In the earliest period, during which Protestantism comes to America, home missions are confined to Indian evangelization and a more or less irregular ministry to the spiritual needs of scattered and isolated white groups on the Atlantic seaboard. They are thus a spontaneous, unorganized response in the name of Christ to the crying needs of spiritual destitution.

In the second period home missions reach the Mississippi River. Heroic Jesuits had preceded them in daring and sacrificial explorations and ministries to the Indians of the Middle West. Now Protestants follow, whose pioneer urge and economic aspirations have combined to thrust them across the Appalachians and scatter them over the wide expanse of the Mississippi's eastern watershed. There are still no home mission societies or boards, though "pious funds" are being raised which are the tiny brooks that later become a stream for the support of missionary endeavor. This is the period of the preachers whose passion for God and for the souls of men drove them forth into the

wilderness. They cannot wait for roads and wagons and steamboats; afoot or on horseback they find their way through forests; in canoes they follow the water courses, preaching to small companies of settlers. They organize local churches and lay the foundations for the institutions of church and state which future generations will build. Their work is made effective through the very character of many of the pioneers, who have sturdy habits and a robust faith. This is the era of the covered wagon, whose groaning wheels carry thousands of families to the rich fertile uplands and valleys, out where the West begins. When that missionary pathfinder, Samuel J. Mills, faces a thwarted foreign missionary ambition, he devotes himself with equal passion to the evangelization of his own land. He comes back to Connecticut from trips that have taken him west to the Mississippi and south to the Gulf of Mexico, to report districts of from twenty to fifty thousand people with no preacher. From Lake Erie to the Gulf of Mexico the country is declared to be a valley of the shadow of death.

In the third period home missions become national. This is the era of aggressive sectarian competition and rivalry, out of which issues much good to bless America, as well as some evils, the fruits of which abide. The organization of denominational and undenominational missionary societies is the order of the day. National church extension is the main feature. The

emancipation of the slaves adds a task complicated by racial attachments, and a new immigration injects the foreign language problem. Soon the Spanish American War brings further racial and lingual and cultural problems in the addition of multitudes to whom home missions must minister in the West Indies, Cuba, Santo Domingo, Haiti and Porto Rico; a distinctly foreign touch is added to home missions. A fourth period dawns when home missions begin to be cooperative. This is the period which began about a generation ago and which is rapidly remaking missionary method and organization. The unifying elements in this latest missionary development will be considered later.

What Has Happened to Religion?

In recent years the problem of Christianizing America has been made far more difficult by those changes in our civilization which we have been noting, the changes produced by inquiry, knowledge, freedom, wealth and power. In new and perplexing social conditions the churches must do their work today. But this is not all. Religion itself has been influenced to an extent that we dare not ignore. The spirit of inquiry has not been willing to let religion alone. It, too, with its sacred books and practices, its creeds and organizations, has been subjected to critical processes. These processes have been unfair at times, as when religion has been treated as though spiritual experiences and

ideals could be weighed on scales or measured by foot rules or analyzed in test tubes. On the other hand, they have been of immense value in separating the wheat of valid experience and spiritual reality from the chaff of superstition and outgrown tradition and folklore. Even the sciences, which at first were thought to be sounding the death-knell of faith—astronomy and geology two generations ago, biology a little later, and psychology and physics in our own time—have provided the foundations of a sounder and surer faith. They have confirmed anew the bitter discovery of Engels, the atheistic German socialist, that "religion thrives on a fare that one would expect to be fatal to it." No good cause can be injured by the acquisition of knowledge and truth, though a transition period like our own is always a perilous one.

What we need to remember is that such an intellectual and social revolution as we are witnessing could not take place without exercising far-reaching influence in every field of human thought and life. The old bases of authority have been unsettled. The attitude of the average man to religion, of the churchman to his church and his Bible, of all men to the realities of life and death, has changed for better or for worse. At present there is great confusion as to standards of religious belief and action. There is outspoken doubt about the church, and widespread indifference to its claims.

We dare not remain indifferent to things that are being widely written and said and that affect the whole atmosphere in which we must now preach the gospel. If religion is to have permanent and far-reaching social value, it must take account of the new knowledge of the nature and needs of man in present social situations, and consider the help that science can give it in dealing with the everyday lives of men in a scientific age. Biblical criticism and changed doctrinal emphases must be reckoned with, whether they are friendly or unfriendly to religion. Perhaps they are both. Real knowledge cannot ultimately hurt any good cause. Premature or partial statements may be temporarily harmful, but facts cannot be neglected on that account. They must be faced fearlessly, quite without regard to what may happen in the process to cherished conceptions of truth.

It is clear that much is happening to home missions because so much has happened to America, and to religion, and to our everyday life. A great deal more is likely to happen with which we shall have to reckon, which indeed we ought to welcome. Whatever it is that is affecting missions, its influence seems to be reflected in changing missionary motives, and to be registering in the offices of missionary treasurers. The new conditions are the more difficult and perplexing because they have come so swiftly. We use a fitting figure of speech when we speak of the stream of life.

Life is like a river in many respects. Surely it is so in that a river may in some places move lazily through great level flatlands as if it cared not at all to reach the ocean, while in other places it may dash forward with rush and tumult and roar, as though it were mad to find rest in the depths of the sea. There are level reaches of human history that record almost no perceptible progress, whereas these recent years have been marked by the most amazing changes in science and philosophy and theology, in popular moral standards, in everything that belongs to our common daily living. In these times a day is becoming as a thousand years in the sight of men as well as of God.

Jesus a Disturber

No follower of Jesus ought to be disturbed by change. Jesus himself came to inaugurate change, both in personal life and in social conditions, of the most radical and far-reaching character. That was an amazing word, a really shocking saying, recorded only by that evangelist who seems to have had an ear for the radical social challenge in the Master's words, which Jesus one day hurled at the crowd, "I am come to send fire on the earth." To the people who lived in the cities of Palestine in Jesus' day, the sort of person who cast firebrands among the people's homes must have been no less terrifying than now. How could Jesus use such an awful illustration and add a sentence to

the effect that he could hardly wait to see the conflagration start?—"Would that it were already kindled."

We do not assume that in saying this Jesus advocated destruction by fire, any more than he advocated war when he said, "I came not to send peace but a sword"; nor any more than he despised Joseph and Mary when he said, "If any man come after me and hate not his father and mother he cannot be my disciple." But these sayings of Jesus must be taken seriously even though, of course, we cannot take them literally. Jesus came to do a work of reconstruction; to displace the bad social order which he called the world with a good social order which he called the kingdom. Before the kingdom can come, there are certain things that must go. The new structure cannot be erected till some of the old structures that occupy the ground have been reduced to ashes. Destruction and construction are parallel and related processes. Followers of Jesus must not be surprised or shocked by change, even though change be radical. We have to reckon with these hard sayings of Jesus—so very hard, indeed, for a comfortable, prosperous, conservative society. "I am come to cast fire upon the earth." "I came not to send peace but a sword." "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven," it puts into life a principle that sets it to fermenting, a very disturbing process. It releases hopes and holds forth ideals that make it forever impossible for those

who cherish them to be content with things as they are.

The earliest followers of Jesus anticipated immediate and revolutionary social changes. Paul and his companions were charged with turning the world upside down, and they no doubt gloried in this recognition by their opponents of the nature and effectiveness of the gospel. T. R. Glover speaks of the early Christians as "perfectly fearless, absurdly happy, and always getting into trouble." The persecution of the early church by the established government and religion of Rome was inevitable. Christ and Nero belonged to two radically different and mutually exclusive kingdoms. Nobody should have been surprised at the conflict, just as nobody should be surprised at the present social ferment in China and Russia, and in milder form in England and America. It would be a sad reflection on Christianity if some social revolution did not come to deliver the oppressed.

Three things are quite manifestly happening to home missions as a result of changing conditions in American life and thought.

Missionary method is being challenged and changed by the scientific spirit of our times. The home mission faith of the fathers was very simple. The covered wagon had been carrying pioneers from the East to the great West, where they had established themselves, and where churches were feeble or nonexistent, to the peril

of their souls' salvation. Pagan Indians were living in the country, in native moral and spiritual destitution. God's agency for the salvation of these precious souls was the church, the dynamic was the gospel. Out of these convictions it was easy to develop major and minor premises which led to the inevitable conclusion that the Eastern churches must give money to their home mission boards which should be used in organizing mission churches, in building meeting houses, and in supporting preachers with a view to giving every man, woman and child a chance to experience salvation and ultimately reach the heavenly home.

When a mass of Negroes were delivered from slavery, when the stream of non-Protestant immigrants began to widen, when the Spanish American War brought new territory under the flag, the home mission task became still more urgent but the missionary motive did not change. Here were more people to be saved through the preaching of the gospel, more children to be reached and helped in the schools that were beginning to be established.

We would not today take so many things for granted. The preaching of the gospel may be found to include vastly more than the pronouncing of formal discourses each Sunday from a sacred desk, the conduct of Sunday school classes, and the holding of annual or semi-annual revival meetings. Methods and institu-

tions and programs must be adapted to every fresh discovery of human need. And so it comes to pass today that home missions call for extended surveys. Intensive studies of definite geographical areas are now being widely made. They reveal the moral and religious conditions prevailing, together with the peculiar and prevalent needs of the people. They show what is required to make the work of the church effective, and what methods are being employed. We insist on knowing the facts in order that we may create a program in harmony with the facts. This is better than to construct the program in conformity with preconceived theory, and impose it upon individuals or communities with the naïve conviction that whatever will not adjust itself to our obviously wise and correct planning is to be charged to the stubbornness of unregenerate human nature.

An outstanding illustration of how missionary policy is waiting upon scientific method is to be found in the five-year program of survey and adjustment authorized at the National Comity Conference at Cleveland in 1928. Two types of surveys have been conducted by the Home Missions Council as a result. The first is the "every-community survey" carried on under the auspices of state interdenominational bodies. Thus far these have been limited to town and country communities, and have had as their objective the discovery of the adequacy or inadequacy of the distribution of

the churches. They have revealed conditions that ought immediately to affect missionary policy.

The Maine survey, for example, included 485 communities; 13 of these, all located in one northern county, were discovered to be solidly Roman Catholic; 131 towns (townships) were found to be inadequately churched, having but 83 churches and these weak and ineffective; 188 towns were adequately churched if the adjective be broadly interpreted; 153 towns needed adjustment because of unmistakable overchurching. The work of the churches is so frankly and necessarily competitive as to become sadly ineffective. In Pennsylvania the survey revealed the extent to which overchurching is responsible for the limited size and strength of the congregations. One-third the number of churches in the open country and in small hamlets have less than fifty members each, while another third have less than one hundred members each. Only 62 per cent of the village churches and only 19 per cent of hamlet and country churches have resident pastors. In the country only one-fifth of the churches have the full time of a minister. In 150 smaller townships there are 798 Protestant churches, or one for every 223 persons. One township with a population of 1300 has ten churches. Another township with a population of less than 400 has nine churches and one abandoned church. The Oklahoma survey reveals that 3 per cent of the total membership of the churches of the state is in

non-Protestant bodies. The average membership per Protestant church for the entire state is only 104. In the rural counties it is 69. Of the rural churches 73 per cent have no resident minister, or are without ministerial supply. Only 8 per cent have full-time resident ministers.

The second type of survey that is being carried on by the Home Missions Council deals with special or exceptional situations. Special survey projects have been undertaken, including a study of Mexican population outside of the Southwest; of the Ozark mountain area; of Ardmore, Oklahoma, selected as a typical small city; of Negro churches in Cleveland, Ohio; and of economic, social and religious factors in numerous country areas, East and West. The Mexican study, to take but a single illustration, locates Mexican people in the Northern states to which they have immigrated, and discloses the conditions in which they live; as newcomers in a community, they have now to put up with the most unsatisfactory housing accommodations, and, similarly, no adequate provision has been made for their religious needs.

The practice of modern home missions is going to be affected far more widely by this new scientific attitude than we can forecast. Much of our survey work may still be superficial, but the principle involved is generally accepted, and there is a growing reverence for facts as determinative of missionary policy.

We need not fear that anything good in the traditional methods and appeals will be lost. Christ and his authority, man and his spiritual need, the gospel and its power, abide as eternal facts of life. But methods and motives and aims must undergo inquiry, to separate what is living and essential from what is extraneous and outworn. This is one thing that is happening to home missions. It calls for a leadership that is not to be thrown into a panic because of changing views and conditions.

Cleveland furnishes an interesting example of the way in which home missions must be constantly adapting its methods to changing conditions. What a few years before had been one of the fine residence sections of that city of lovely homes became almost over night a totally different community through an invasion of alien peoples speaking strange tongues and following unfamiliar customs, Jewish, Slavic, Italian. More people than ever, more human need, more Christian opportunity. But the Woodland Avenue Church, with its well located property and substantial plant, found its congregations and income diminishing and its burdens becoming too great to be borne.

Home missions came to the relief of this struggling and desperate church, with financial resources and an inspiring and able leader. An extensive and varied community program was developed, and two adjacent buildings were purchased to provide additional facili-

ties for social and educational activities, as well as dwelling-places for the college-trained men and women who were secured to help in the work. Thus far all was well. The problem was solved, or might have been but for something that happened four thousand miles away. The murder of an Austrian archduke plunged the world into war. Among the consequences were radical population changes in Cleveland. Immigration no longer furnished enough men for the rough labor essential to industry, and her captains looked to the Southland. Within a very short space of time the Woodland Center, developed to meet the needs of foreign-language groups, discovered that they were moving away. Black faces began to appear in the streets. Presently Negro songs and laughter were heard issuing from the porches and open windows from which but yesterday came the babel of foreign tongues. Again the work at the Woodland Avenue Church house declined, and for a time the building was closed. But again home missions made an adjustment to the changed conditions. The newcomers were Protestant, English-speaking, and had a distinctly favorable natural attitude toward religion. The building was reopened and restaffed with Negro people chiefly in mind. And now it is once more the center of a busy and fruitful ministry. Religious and educational services of a high order are carried forward. The latter include courses from kindergarten to col-

lege preparatory, and in addition classes in domestic science, sewing, music, and a well supervised department of athletics. The problem of racial prejudice and the spirit in which it is being met are illustrated by the following incident:

"One of the little Negro boys came in badly battered up as the result of a fight with a bigger boy who had called him a 'nigger.' A few days afterward he asked the head worker whether he could bring in a bunch of 'wops' who would be glad to come and use the building if they might be privileged to do so. Receiving an affirmative answer he swung the entrance door wide open and yelled, 'Come in, you wops,' and a group of poor Italian children trooped in. Then the head worker took him aside and asked him why he called those boys 'wops,' and after a little conversation he said, 'Why, Miss P——, is wop a word like nigger?' And when told it was, he said, 'I will never call anybody that name any more.' "

Individualism is being supplemented by social aim. There was a vast amount of social work in William Carey's foreign mission program in India, and Dr. Douglass in *The New Home Missions* has a chapter entitled "From Social By-product to Social Aim," in which he shows that the early home missionaries were larger than their theories. While defining their aims in terms of personal salvation, they were at the same time laying the foundations for the social reconstruction of

American communities. Pioneer home missionary promoters and missionaries were interested in colonization as a part of the process of building American civilization, as well as interested in plucking brands from the burning. The very conditions in which they wrought made social challenge inescapable. Home missions went into the Western Reserve and elsewhere in Christian colonies, transplanting bodily the social institutions of the older life of New England. Along with his good news about a heavenly home and his rugged ethical teachings, the pioneer missionary brought schools, built hospitals and courthouses, helped produce law and order and found commonwealths. But to the missionary of that day these effects of his work were by-products of a process that had a less earthly aim.

The fact is that both foreign and home missionary movements arose and have gone forward largely under the impulse of the individualistic conception of religion. At Mount Hermon, Massachusetts, in 1886 the Student Volunteer Movement was organized for inspiring missionary work among students on the basis of a singularly individualistic slogan, "The evangelization of the world in this generation." A world of individuals was to be evangelized through such a multiplication of missionaries as would give every last man a chance to accept Christ as a personal Savior, all within a period of thirty-three years. Later the Lay-

men's Missionary Movement came along, with its clarion call to the men of the churches to produce the money that would support this colossal program of personal evangelization. Of course no one could reasonably dream of evangelizing society in a generation. In like manner our home missions grew out of and went forward on a wave of revivalism that was highly individualistic, making personal regeneration and the heavenly hope the chief concern. Now this exclusiveness of interest is being changed.

Increasing socialization marks a major current in the life of our times. Religion could not escape its influence if it would. Followers of Jesus should not wish to escape it. For religion as Jesus conceived it and lived it and proclaimed it was supremely social. He preached the gospel of the noblest of the Hebrew prophets, the gospel of the kingdom, with the difference that he knew how the cherished dream could come true. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," he kept saying. "Repent and believe the good news." "The kingdom of God is within you." Only within our own generation has the social gospel of Jesus begun to take the place to which his own emphasis entitles it.

So it is the old gospel that today is being preached again, the oldest gospel. For a long time it was in eclipse. Somewhere along the way there was substituted for Jesus' kingdom of heaven on earth a kingdom of heaven in heaven, which became the center of the

hope and aspiration of men in their practices of living as well as in their songs and sermons. The great advance in personal freedom that came with the Reformation gave undue emphasis to individualism. The church's task was thought of as having to do primarily or even solely with personal sin and virtue, with the regeneration and ripening of the individual soul for a heavenly triumph. The hope which Jesus cherished, the reconstruction of human society here on this planet around the will of God, became fainter and fainter until for most Christians it faded out. Now it is coming back. In the work of Christian missions both at home and abroad that hope of what Jesus meant by the kingdom is again coming to the place where it will dictate missionary policy and measure missionary success.

We are becoming increasingly concerned with the course Christianity has taken since it made its early conquests. Much of historical and even of contemporary Christianity seems, as the old legal phrase puts it, to be irrelevant and incompetent. There is no easy single solution of the multiplying problems of our times. There is no short cut to the kingdom of heaven. We are quite sure that the religion of Jesus is essential to the good life, here or anywhere. We become more certain, decade by decade, that our increasing social complexity and confusion is making more imperative demands upon religion. Some other

system than this one might conceivably survive without religion, though there is no historical record of any such experiment. But for our bewildering, machine-made civilization, religion as Jesus interpreted it is fundamental and indispensable. And so we are troubled when history shows us that religion has not always been on the side of the angels, not even the Christian religion. But the hopeful aspect here is the willingness of the church to scrutinize and criticize its own practices and processes. We are willing to inquire of ourselves afresh just what the religion of Jesus really is, and what it would mean to the world if it were given vital expression through the church.

But it is to be emphasized that individualism in our Christian teaching is being supplemented and not supplanted by social aim. Untrue to Jesus we should be indeed if we thought that the new earth could be created without the new man. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus' own work was done almost wholly with individuals, but the social aim was never absent. The virtues he commended were social virtues, the sins he condemned were social sins, the ideals he cherished were social ideals, the hope that inspired him was a social hope.

Our missionary gospel today has its message as of old for every life, but also and increasingly for all of life. Its work is both extensive and intensive. The nearest life to ours as well as the remotest shares its

loving concern. Recognizing that Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, it does its utmost to let every man know of this sacrificial love. But it is becoming concerned that every aspect of man's life shall be reached and redeemed. It is interested not in men's souls alone but in men's bodies and minds, in men's homes and communities, in the opportunities of every individual for a more abundant life. It claims for Christ every last man and woman and child, but it also claims every element of the social fabric in which their lives are knitted together. Setting itself to seek the spiritual renewal of the individual life, it finds that it must go on to accomplish the spiritual reconstruction of every political, economic, and cultural agency through which common life finds expression.

If this wholeness of life is what we are aiming at, we have a task that is simply stupendous. We cannot measure the value of home missions any longer by the number of new churches organized or the number of new church buildings erected. The test is an intensive one. Are we laying hold of American life and changing its spirit and aim? Are we allaying prejudice and promoting good-will? Are we reducing conflict between races and classes? Are we enriching the influence of the home? Are we helping to promote the common welfare in commerce and industry, in education and the arts? Are we creating a generous attitude

toward satisfying human need and sharing world problems? Are we dealing courageously with those economic, imperialistic, militaristic aspects of our civilization which have made it seem to other peoples a veritable peril? These are some of the tests by which, according to the new conception of home missions, our efficiency will be measured henceforth.

What is taking place in America today is not something apart from our missionary task, but something that is woven into its very fabric. Industry, commerce, politics, are not apart from missions; they are vital areas of the undertaking. We must evangelize these aspects of life, bringing them into harmony with the teachings of Christ, or we lose not only America but the chance to render further service in India or China or Japan or Africa. There is a chapter entitled "The Great Hindrance" in Stanley Jones's now famous book, *The Christ of the Indian Road.* "The great hindrance" he speaks of is the failure of Christianity at work in the East to function socially at home in the West. Twenty-five years ago missionaries were pointing to our civilization with pride as an evidence of what Christianity might do for the Orient. Today aspects of that same civilization constitute a missionary's chief embarrassment. Thoughtful men in the East see more clearly than we do what materialism and industrialism and imperialism and nationalism have done to us, and they are asking to be delivered from

the so-called Christian civilization at the same time that they are gladly welcoming Christ.

Recall those amazing achievements in American life which we were considering in the first chapter—the increase of scientific knowledge, the triumphs of invention, the achievements of industry: mass production, business organization, national wealth, international power. All these vast energies must be taken over and directed by the spirit of Christ. While we cannot save society except by the cooperative efforts of redeemed individuals having in them this spirit of Christ, we lose our very fight to redeem individuals unless we can change the godless, hopeless, unfair conditions in which so many of them must live. It is a life-and-death conflict between Christian idealism and selfishness. Only courageous churchmanship will count in such a conflict.

Sectarianism is being supplanted by cooperative action. There was a time in American church history, and not so long ago, when the denominations in their relation to each other were frankly antagonistic and intolerant. Each of them, large or small, considered itself the custodian of some essential aspect of Christian doctrine or organization without which no other group could quite qualify as a genuine church of Christ. Most of these denominations looked forward to a time when their own particular interpretation and practice should become universal. It was therefore necessary

for them to oppose each the other as a perverter of the truth of Christ, or at least as incompetent to proclaim the truth in its fulness. Gradually the policy of intolerance was succeeded by one of isolation. No longer did it seem necessary to one denomination to attack the others, but not yet did it seem desirable to have anything to do with them. And so each church developed its program and went forth to conquer the world just as though there had been no other church engaged in the same task with equal consecration.

At last antagonism and isolation began to be succeeded by appreciation and the beginning of cooperation and comity. It became increasingly difficult for any one church to ignore the other churches. At the same time the competition which had come down from the old days of intolerance and which the period of isolation had done nothing to modify, became itself intolerable. Comity has been a great step in advance. Cooperation has become the watchword. A later chapter will tell a story of cooperative endeavor that is most heartening. It is sufficient to note here that sectarianism has for some time been on the defensive. It must now contend with a well established public opinion for the right to continue to set separate bodies of the church over against one another as rivals and competitors.

But it is daily becoming more evident that home missions must cast out every remaining vestige of de-

nominational pride and sectarian rivalry. The sort of thing that we all desire to do cannot be done in the old competitive way. If our aim were to select from the total population persons of a particular temperamental or theological or ecclesiastical bias and unite them in separate congenial companies, the old organization and method quite possibly might be all that would be required. But if it is the total life of America that we are seeking to transform, then nothing short of the total forces and resources of the whole church will suffice. In the larger social field to which a new conception of home missions calls us, the problems and the needs are now seen to be of a sort with which our common sectarian differences have little or nothing to do. Sectarianism is concerned with orders and ordinances and organization, with theological niceties and philosophical subtleties. The human world is concerned with life and what makes for its abundance. And this was Jesus' concern. He came to show a new way of life and to empower men to find it and show the way of it.

A program of social evangelism is required which aims to save and socialize not only every member of the community but the community itself. A religious educational strategy is demanded that will undertake to reach every boy and girl. A united opposition in the name of the brotherly Christ must be made to conditions that make for racial and national hatreds,

poverty, exploitation, war. Paganism is as great an obstacle in the way of the kingdom today as it was in the days of the early Christians. For pagan ethics Christian ethics must be substituted. In the face of these tasks a divided church is hopelessly inadequate. It is cooperation or collapse, for church and for society. All this is becoming more clear to more people every day.

But it is not the inefficiency of our present organization in the light of the new day and its demands which most condemns it. The chief indictment against a divided church is that it is a continuing denial of the essential genius of the message and mission of Jesus Christ. The whole of his religion could be comprehended in a single word—fellowship. Jesus came to break down barriers, to promote understanding, to create fellowship between man and God and between man and man. To say this is to indicate his whole philosophy. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Imagine the shock of these words as it must have been felt by those to whom they first came. The contemporaries of Jesus had inherited a system of worship in which the altar was central, and Jesus was saying that a broken fellowship is of greater concern to God than sacrificial blood on the altar.

Worship can wait; opportunity to bind up a disrupted fellowship is something that cannot be postponed. Every single congregation ought to be a laboratory for experiments in fellowship. By its standard there is no place in Christianity for a class church which, deliberately or by implication, excludes all except those of a single race or creed or class or culture. The conviction is emerging that the church as the collective body of Christians is a fellowship whose aim is a still larger brotherhood, the kingdom of heaven on earth.

As Christians we have always said that the hope of the world rests on Christ and his gospel, but today we are seeing more clearly why this is true. Christ's gospel is a gospel of brotherliness among men. It is the good news of a social order including all men, separated now by whatever barriers, national, cultural, racial, lingual, creedal, or class. We are seeing today how fatal under modern conditions these divisions can be. Whatever their differences as groups, men must live together on good terms in the modern world or society itself suffers destruction.

The proposal of Jesus was to demonstrate the beauty and power of fellowship through his followers, who were to become the church. The church was to be made up of all sorts of people having in common their faith in him and their loyalty to the kingdom of God. Every church was to be a means by which fellowship was to be demonstrated. Through the contact of the

members, the fraternal spirit would ultimately saturate and save society. It follows, then, that sins against fellowship are sins of the first magnitude. The virtues that make for fellowship are of the highest worth. The church that is not a fellowship is not truly a church of Christ. Since world fellowship is their own avowed goal, the sins against fellowship of which the churches themselves are guilty are bound to receive increasing recognition.

The New Spirit Becomes Articulate

The home mission agencies have been responding to these changing conditions. A moderate illustration is found by comparing two annual reports of a representative board which show a quarter of a century between them. The earlier report indicates six major interests: the support of English-speaking missionaries, toward which an amount was appropriated in excess of one-half of the total receipts for general purposes; the erection of church buildings; Negro education; Indian missions; Spanish-speaking work (Mexico), and missionary work among the older immigrant groups, Scandinavian, German, French, and Chinese. Less than two thousand dollars was expended that year for work among the later European immigrants. There was no hint of cooperation with other than denominational agencies. The later report included "the study of rural conditions, with the information

that in five states there are directors of town and country church work; courses of study for missionaries; the study of tendencies in American foreign-speaking groups; a paragraph on migrant populations and one on radio evangelism; a reference to the effect upon Western states of national and worldwide economic conditions; an extended statement concerning the need for the development of Christian charitable institutions; and a report of the social work being done in thirty-two Christian centers, social centers that give a frankly Christian message." This is probably a fair index of the situation. There are some home mission boards whose reports would show more progress in making adjustment to new conditions; there are others that would show less. But the trend is distinctly encouraging to those who desire to see Christianity in America keep up with the needs of the people, and catch up with the ideals of Jesus.

More detailed and impressive indication that a new home missions is emerging to meet the requirements of a new America appears as we proceed. The most conspicuous evidence is the North American Home Missions Congress held at Washington in December, 1930. This conference grew out of another notable gathering, the National Comity Conference held in Cleveland in 1928. It was part of a five-year program of survey and adjustment involving a degree of unity and prophetic outlook which had not hitherto found

expression. Three great world Christian conferences had preceded: Stockholm, in 1925, with its emphasis upon those universal aspects of life which concern the churches of the world; Lausanne, in 1927, which sought to discover what bases of unity may exist in the varying types of Christian faith and order; and Jerusalem, in 1928, which challenged the Christian world with the changes that have taken place in foreign missionary processes and problems. Following these, Washington became significant as an unprecedented appraisal of the new and old facts and forces that condition the work of making North America Christian. Here were eight hundred delegates officially representing thirty or more communions and many associated organizations. Participating in the deliberations to which they made outstanding contributions were representatives of the peoples who have been recipients of home mission ministries, as well as representatives of every interested type of home mission personnel.

The Washington congress declared to the American people and to the world that the day of opportunism is past and that issues must be faced in terms of a larger and wiser statesmanship. It set forth impressively the immense size and complexity of the home mission enterprise and the wide range of its interests. It disclosed the extent to which the spirit and practice of Christian fellowship have already advanced, and stated

the reasons why they must go much further. It lifted into high visibility the effect which educational and economic changes are having on human life and must therefore have upon missionary programs. It pronounced its conviction that home missions must think of the salvation of society as well as of individuals, and that the teachings of Christ are sufficient for meeting all the problems of the collective life. It confessed to shortcomings and limitations, and while pleading for larger cooperation and unity, asserted that even this achievement would be an empty gain unless Christ shall vitalize anew the church and all its work. In fine, it was a stirring and hopeful expression of what is happening to home missions, and promised that the home missions of tomorrow will be characterized by increasingly competent, courageous, and Christian churchmanship.

CHAPTER III

HOME MISSIONS ARE . . .

WHILE we are interested in the total impact of Christianity upon American life, our particular concern is with the more limited group of agencies and activities belonging to home missions. The term home missions itself is, however, a flexible one.

The caption of the present chapter raises a question as to the grammatical construction by which we may speak of home missions. Home missions *are,* or home missions *is?* Which is preferable? For the present, let us use the plural form of the verb. Certainly home missions as developed and now proceeding would appear to be something with which no verb in the singular could be fitted. Like the thousands of Minnesota lakes that lie to the south and west of Itasca as one views them on a motor trip, the many home missions activities would seem to be fairly distinct and separate. There must, of course, in each case be some unifying principle. Without pausing now to inquire about this point, let us proceed on the basis of things as they appear: that home missions are an aggregation of distinct and separate activities and processes.

Home missions began in the performance of a

natural and inescapable duty to the unfortunate native race whom the earliest settlers drove from their ancestral lands, and whose wrongs and helplessness stirred the hearts of the more humane and brotherly of the white invaders. They continued in the pursuit of the westering frontier, where the children who had come from Christian homes in the East were growing up with scant provision or none at all for their spiritual needs. Partly through a sanctified opportunism and partly through deliberate strategy and Christian statesmanship, the movement broadened to include more functions and to embrace wider areas, until now it has become difficult to draw a clear line between home and foreign missions, so unified has the world's work become. Home missions tend more and more to include peace promotion and international relations, law observance and citizenship, interracial and industrial relations, thus rapidly eliminating a former line of demarcation. Furthermore it is now seen that home mission agencies can no longer confine their ministries to "aided" churches, but in significant ways must serve self-supporting churches as well. And far beyond the organizational or other interests of churches as such, home missions tend to go today in ministering to human need and in sweetening the conditions of human life, without overmuch concern as to just what organizational advantages will accrue. This new attitude and these new activities make it difficult and

even undesirable to limit too sharply our conception of home missions.

Painful Pluralism

The pluralizing of home missions through denominational division and competition is only too apparent. The evils of an unbridled sectarianism are so manifest that we are forced to the conclusion that, in ways beyond our present approval and to an extent beyond what any of us now desire, home missions are painfully plural. That competent student of American church life, Dr. Paul Douglass, says, with pardonable bluntness in view of his deep feeling, that "Protestants almost never cooperate for the sheer reasonableness of such action, nor because they want to be brotherly. Cooperation at a given time or place always reflects some particular advantage or particular pressure that serves to carry over previously separate activities into a joint program at this point or that." The study he makes of comity as carried on through a score of city church federations produces much encouraging evidence. But he is compelled to admit that "While the assimilation of the major Protestant groups to one another has gone so far as to cut the ground from under the older sectarianism, stubborn prejudices still thrive in spots. There is a clannishness that takes refuge in the conviction of having a better standing with God than others enjoy. . . . It is, then, into a still

crowding and jostling ecclesiastical world that comity tries to instill the practice of gentle manners and the reign of the fraternal spirit." What an indictment of the method and practice of Christian churches!

The countryside has called still more loudly for comity and unity. From the religious census of 1926 we learned that in more than half the states the percentage of adult population in churches outside of cities of over twenty-five thousand population was less than ever before recorded. The worst showing was made in predominantly Protestant territory, and the worst of this in the so-called home mission states. Edmund deS. Brunner, speaking of comity and cooperation at the North American Home Missions Congress, felt forced in the interest of the truth to make what he admitted were "not pleasant statements." His studies had disclosed intra- as well as interdenominational competition almost beyond belief, as in one Pennsylvania county where half of fifty-odd churches of a single denomination were competing with one another in their own household of faith. One of the most discouraging features of the situation was the fact that denominational administrators were oftentimes willing to leave weak, one-church fields poorly supported and with untrained, part-time workers and perhaps no financial aid, while they supplied competitive fields with better-trained men, often on full time, and with generous grants-in-aid. Dr. Brunner

was quite certain that these unhappy conditions remain unchanged because many church administrators are not conscious of the operation of social forces that call for adjustment, and lack the courage to deal with competition in any statesmanlike way.

Diversity of Operations

The Home Missions Congress confessed its inability to produce a sharp definition of home missions as differentiated from the work of so-called self-supporting churches, or from the total work of the church in the home land. What the congress pronounced to be the objectives of home missions as more strictly defined deserves to be quoted verbatim:

1. To win men and women to discipleship of Jesus Christ, to unite them with other disciples in the fellowship of the Christian church, and to educate them for worship and service at home and abroad by helping them to discover and to accept for themselves and for society at large the full consequence of Christian discipleship.
2. To make the church available to those sections of America which lack its ministry.
3. To supply adequate church leadership where the work of the present church is unsuccessful or inadequate.
4. In the case of handicapped or retarded areas or underprivileged groups, to assist in providing those institutions and services which are the necessary elements of a Christian standard of living, to the end that the Christian community life may be developed.
5. To bring the Christian impulse to bear upon the broad social and civic questions of our day.

Let us look at home missions as they find expression in these general forms of service.

Evangelization comes first. More than all else, past, present and future, home missions have meant and must mean evangelization: "To win men and women to discipleship of Jesus Christ." Personal Christian character is our main objective. Over against the tragic story of personality, starved and desperate, related in the first chapter, home missions tell many a story of souls salvaged, reclaimed, and triumphing over sordid surroundings by the power of Christ's gospel mediated through friendliness.

From the Little Lost River valley came a call to a missionary a hundred and twenty-five miles away to come over the mountains and across the desert and hold some gospel meetings. That trip meant for one family a Christian woman enheartened who had not been to church for fourteen years, her husband reclaimed from the power of drink, and their two older daughters, aged sixteen and fourteen respectively, finding Christ in the first church services they had ever attended.

Three colored lads were perched on the fence one day awaiting the arrival of a fourth for their crap game. Frightened by the unexpected approach of a man who appeared around a bend in the road, two of them made a hasty exit, leaving the third, a bewildered eleven-year-old, to face the missionary. His decision

to be a "bold bad man" was changed by the timely arrival of the missionary that day, with the result that that boy is now an educated minister of the gospel, with a doctor's degree, and field superintendent of Sunday school missions to Negroes in twelve states.

"A boy with a black skin has no chance," said a perplexed little boy in the corn field, pondering life's problems as he worked. "I wish I could change my skin just long enough to get an education." He could not change his skin, but he could and did get the education by the help of home missions. He is now principal of a South Carolina school, giving a chance to four hundred other Negro boys and girls.

Lee Chang was a seven-year-old Chinese boy in San Francisco to whose name a feature writer who found newspaper copy in his adventures added "the Incorrigible." Lee Chang just simply could not keep from running away. Ten times they brought him home, but finally the police got tired of taking him back to his father and turned him over to the juvenile court. "One more chance," said the judge, and forth the boy went with his father, both apparently happy and hopeful. To celebrate the event the father bought for dinner a fine chicken, of which, alas, he was destined not to eat. Before dinner time both the boy and the chicken had disappeared. Three days later Lee Chang was brought to Chung Mei Home, a hospitable institution for Chinese boys which home missions

established at Berkeley a few years ago. Together with about sixty other boys, he is now developing, under wisely directed educational influences, a more healthy and normal personality and attitude.

The first missionary to Alaska from the States found that a little girl in her day school had been given in marriage according to tribal custom to a man twenty-seven years her senior. A courageous rebel against a cruel custom, she fled as the canoe bearing her husband approached, and found refuge in the missionary's home. From mission student she advanced to be interpreter, translator, teacher, author, missionary. She married the man of her choice, a student at the mission school, and added the duties of motherhood. Left a widow with three small children, she turned again to the missionary who had befriended her imperilled girlhood. One of her sons is now a business man in a New Jersey city, where her daughter recently graduated as a trained nurse. The other son, still living in Alaska, is the only native who has been a member of the legislature. In 1930 the Presbyterian General Assembly U.S.A. declared the office of ruling elder open to women. Among the first women to be thus honored in service was this gifted and devoted Alaskan Indian, Mrs. Tillie Paul Tamaru, who as a girl found a friend who changed the whole course of her life.

It is surely true that the gates of color, culture, race and language cannot prevail against the church

that has caught the evangelistic passion of its Master. Wherever that church goes, evangelism finds effective expression. "We hardly need to say," declared the Washington congress, "but we do say without reservation, that in all our discussion of program and method and technique we recognize the primacy that must be given to the religious motive. We are convinced that it is more than ever necessary today to give to the church a new place, a heightened prestige, a widened influence in American life. We are convinced that our greatest need is the development of personal religious life and personal discipleship as a prelude to the uniting of disciples in fellowship and worship and service." This noble declaration not only asserts the primacy of evangelism but suggests by implication, at least, the chief defect in current evangelistic processes. To be effective it must possess characteristics of the evangelism of Jesus that, alas, are too often absent. To be completely Christian, as the congress put it, our evangelism must help people "to discover and to accept for themselves and for society at large the full consequence of Christian discipleship." The intrinsic importance of this home mission activity and its vital place in all home mission work cannot be overstated.

Analysis of home missions in terms of evangelization places before us a number of its interests which are common to all the churches and so well known as

to require no lengthy consideration here. There are the Indians, among whom home missions began, many of them as yet completely unevangelized. There are the frontier folk, whom missionary-minded ministers, with true pioneer patience and courage, followed over the mountains and across the plains and then, tarrying only until the institutions of civilization began to rise, hurried away from in order to blaze new trails for Christ, as they must continue to do until the last frontier has faded. In the meantime new frontiers began to appear in the older parts of the country. Great cities grew vastly greater through an inrush of pioneers from every part of the earth. Alien in speech and culture, they constituted a new and perplexing problem for evangelism. The relatively recent discovery of the number and needs of migrant Americans, the addition to our population of the people of the West Indies and upwards of two million Mexicans, along with the continuing call for an evangelical ministry in the Mormon country, suggest how varied and how inescapable is the evangelistic task.

Closely related to evangelization, if indeed not an essential part of it, is another home mission function which we have called church extension. As the congress put it, this is a major objective: "To make the church available to those sections of America which lack its ministry." It is in this field that home missions

have achieved their greatest results. Church extension involves organizing churches and subsidizing them with financial aid while they are coming to self-support. A complete tabulation would show that practically all the greatest and most influential churches in the United States and Canada began as missionary enterprises. The old First Presbyterian Church of New York is a good example, having arisen in a colonial settlement by the aid of offerings gathered in Scotland, to become in its maturity the mother of many churches and the helper of all good causes.

Pilgrims and strangers must be served. In these later days church extension is adding new forms. A significant illustration is the work among migrant peoples, members of the American population who are pitifully lacking in the ministries of the church. There are not less than two millions of them, men, women and children. The seasonal character of the crops seems to require this flow of human life, this "homeless, voteless, jobless" army of laborers and this ever moving procession of families. These migrant workers are cutting trees in American forests, shearing sheep in the Rockies, picking cotton in the South, harvesting wheat and corn in the Middle West, picking and packing fruit everywhere. Women and children are cutting lettuce and asparagus, picking berries, pulling beets, weeding onions, scooping cranberries, and filling with fruit and vegetables and fish the cans upon which that

peculiarly American implement, the can opener, will be operating.

Every sort of problem that arises in connection with individual and social life in city or country is aggravated for the migrant groups. Health hazards are multiplied through insanitary conditions, improper food, exposure, ignorance, poverty and accident. Child labor is practised and defended as necessary on the ground of the heavy demands made by peak seasons. Not play alone but education is made difficult for these children and almost impossible for their elders, who need education in every sense of the word. The economic problem is acute. Living quarters at their best do not approximate the conditions that normal home life requires, and very often they are at their worst. Here is a task that calls for everything the gospel has to offer. Home missions are attempting to meet these desperate human needs through an itinerant ministry and the establishment of Christian social centers. We shall have more to say of this later as an illustration of the new spirit of cooperation.

For many years, work among foreign-speaking peoples has been a home mission function of incalculable importance. It continues to be, although the present slackening in the stream of immigrants changes the task somewhat from one of expansion to one of consolidation. We as religious workers have strong allies in the social workers. They have set forth

goals that have a most intimate relation to our more distinctively evangelistic aims: "To ameliorate the hardships, actual and mental, consequent to removal from native or natural environment and connected with the establishment in the new and foreign environment of America . . . to restore social security and to reestablish that so-called status for individuals in the new country which approaches the level upon which they lived in their original country . . . to quicken the processes of constructive social integration between groups of transplanted people and groups of the native or socially dominant people." These somewhat technically phrased proposals find concrete expression in any process of evangelization that has been touched by the spirit of Christ. "I was a stranger and ye took me in."

As a result of the reduction in immigration and the increased participation of the new Americans in our national prosperity and life, the foreign-language colonies are disintegrating. This indicates an end to the organization of foreign-language churches. What then? Must the fine second-generation American-born families be lost to the churches? They certainly will be, unless the churches show the sincerity of their home missions professions and practise willingness to welcome the newcomer and share with him and his children the privileges of worship and instruction and fellowship. Language and class and color lines do not

absolve us from responsibility toward every soul in our neighborhoods and parishes, unless we are to be churches of a very different type from those Paul describes, churches where middle walls of partition are broken down, and Jew and Greek, freeman and slave, become one fellowship in Christ Jesus. To meet this test we shall have to exercise courage. But when did it not require courage to be genuinely Christian?

City and country must be reached. Home missions have been recognizing for a generation that an aggressive stand must be taken in the cities if the church is not to be submerged. No other territory challenges home missions so desperately as does the city, crowded, noisy, restless, turbulent, jaded. The city is full of people who have been torn loose from older cultures and must form new groupings with no strong cultural bonds. Community lines have faded out, and with them have gone the old intimacies and restraints. Physical contact from crowding is present in excess, but there is little neighborliness or friendly acquaintance. In the midst of the crowd thousands are desolate and lonely. The individual city dweller so easily becomes anonymous. What does his one vote count in the whole, or his single feeble influence and example and contribution? And then he is likely to drift with the current instead of breasting the tide. The city tends to depersonalize men. They lose the certainty that their individual life is significant. What

shall it profit a city if it gain wealth and domain and power and lose the souls of its people? City life is surfeited, packed, jammed, overwhelmed, with material things. Truly "things are in the saddle," and city folk especially are being ridden to death.

Urbanization means more than just the transfer of people from farms and villages to live in cities. It involves a new national psychology. The farm folk that remain on the farm, the villages that resist the pull of urban influences, nevertheless fall under the sway of city ways of thinking and living. The radio, the automobile, the moving picture, the metropolitan daily, now mold the minds of people wherever they may live. And through these media it often comes about that the worst elements of urban civilization go faster and farther than the best.

The urban-rural conflict has wide ramifications and presents an outstanding example of contemporary tendencies. It has developed antagonisms that are mutually hurtful. The city cannot survive without the farms and farmers; rural problems cannot be solved without the help of the cities. And one of the realest of the problems of the country is the city itself. The development of a humane and happy American life calls for the full cooperation of city and country in a common task. It involves what Walter Lippmann has called "a major aspect of American destiny."

The rapid urbanization of American life has been

revolutionary for city and country both. It has challenged the church with issues far above the level of sectarian interests. Mr. George W. Russell (Æ), the Irish poet and philosopher, noting the rate of rural exodus to our cities, is particularly disturbed over predictions that our farm population, now about twenty-three per cent of the total, may easily decrease to ten per cent. "What is going to happen to your civilization if this process goes on?" he asks. "Humanity is like that ancient giant Antæus who drew strength from touching the earth. . . . At present your cities are teeming with vitality, because they are fed from the yet unexhausted countryside and by the sturdy peasantries of the old world." Believing that the extent of unemployment should teach the nation's leaders the necessity of so stabilizing agriculture that the movement to the cities shall diminish, he says, "I think you need at least twenty per cent of your people to continue as a rural community. . . . It will need the highest of political genius so to organize the rural community that something of the culture and prosperity of so great a state will be reflected in the men in the villages and fields. . . . You must open vistas before the small farmers, for only a vast hope can arouse people from a vast despair." Mr. Russell appeals to "the poets and literary men, those who are or should be concerned for the spiritual side of your civilization, that they might bring their imagination to bear upon this work of

building a rural civilization with an appropriate culture." We would point out here that the political genius of which Mr. Russell speaks is indeed essential, but it is not enough. Only the courageous and intelligent application of the principles of Jesus will suffice.

The future of America apparently rests with her cities. This fact does not ignore another, that rural churches have been pouring rich blood into the churches of the city and will continue to do so. Josiah Strong prophesied a generation ago that the urban population of America would soon outnumber the dwellers in towns and villages and on the farms, and that this would mean enormous social changes. His prophecy has been fulfilled. The Federal Census of 1920 showed a population plurality of nearly three million in favor of the cities, which is increased in the 1930 census by more than a quarter of a million. Fifty-six per cent of our people now dwell in sections having more than a thousand persons to the square mile. The effects of this radical reversal of American social and cultural life are already apparent. A machine civilization is conquering the world, though not without much misgiving and perplexed protest.

In that delightful book by Michael Fairless, *The Roadmender,* which Ramsay MacDonald commended to American readers, an old English farmer with a reputation for ability to swing a scythe, protests against the first reaping machines, declaring vehemently: " 'Tis

again' nature; the Lard gave us the land an' the seed, but 'e said that a man should sweat. Where's the sweat, drivin' round wi' two horses cuttin' the straw down an' gatherin' it again, wi' scarce a hand's turn i' the day's work?" Thinking of the rural exodus, he shook his head: "We old 'uns were content wi' earth and the open sky like our feythers before us, but wi' the children 'tis first machines to save doin' a hand's turn o' honest work, an' then land an' sky ain't big enough seemin'ly, nor grand enough; it must be town an' a paved street, an' they sweat their lives out atwixt four walls an' call it seein' life—'tis death an' worse comes to most of 'em. Ay, 'tis better to stay by the land, as the Lard said, till time comes to lie under it." And this farmer had reason, asserts the author, for "his son is the sweeper of a Holborn crossing and many other things that he should not be."

Back to that fundamental Christian ideal with which we began we come again and again—the preciousness of personality. As Edwin Markham says in his poem "Man-Making":

> We all are blind until we see
> That in the human plan
> Nothing is worth the making if
> It does not make the man.
>
> Why build these cities glorious
> If man unbuilded goes?
> In vain we build the world unless
> The builder also grows.

In villages and country communities home missions have done some of their most fruitful work. From the churches they have planted and helped to support, a perennial stream of life has flowed that has brought refreshment to many an arid city community. But here as elsewhere the new conditions have wrought havoc with traditional programs, and it has become imperative that there be developed a new strategy for the evangelization of village and country life. Present conditions in the country center round a decreasing population, hard economic conditions, and a debilitated leadership. Larger farms, bigger machines, scientific methods, are changing the population of the countryside. Religious life has declined. The closing of churches which country people had been accustomed to attend has had a disastrous effect upon their church-going in general. While there is in the rural ministry a growing number of educated and able men who have been as definitely dedicated to Christ's ministry as have been those who have served in foreign fields, it is still true that country churches as a rule have a poor leadership. The resources which are available to the country minister and the country church are slight in comparison with those offered by scientific agriculture and the educational ideals and program of the consolidated school.

Communities in the Southern mountains are offering a new and alluring opportunity for missionary ad-

vance. Too long they have been treated both in program and promotion as peculiar if not queer. As a matter of fact, the problem of the Southern mountain communities is an integral part of the rural problem of America. The modern world is being brought into the mountains, and difficult adjustments have to be made. A missionary program that was planned when these communities were isolated must now be radically modified. Government forces are studying the cooperative, economic, social and religious conditions of these communities, and the results of the study will have great value for home mission boards operating in these sections.

Another challenging call to home missions is coming from the mill towns, especially in the South. The churches in these villages are built upon land which is given or loaned by the company operating the mill. The company also commonly pays part of the expenses of the church, including the minister's salary; free rent, free light, free fuel, and perhaps a telephone, help ease the burdens of the parsonage. It is the conviction of home mission administrators that a new policy must obtain if the largest social and religious ministry is to be given to the people. This will involve the economic independence of the churches, the development of local initiative and resources, a larger interest in the social and living conditions of the workers, and undoubtedly an interdenominational approach.

A Friend in Need

Home missions function further in ministries that "supply adequate church leadership where the work of the present church is unsuccessful or inadequate." Not alone in planting new churches in neglected fields, but equally in aiding existing churches to provide the equipment and leadership that they require, must home missions serve. It is almost a crime against a community to plant a church and thus promise moral and spiritual leadership and ministry, and then go off and leave it to struggle with adverse conditions and eke out a poor existence or die. Better to have fewer mission stations and adequate ones. Better to do intensive work than to over-extend. And here again something more is involved, something that is often more useful than money. The men whom mission boards are sending out to help the churches organize loyalty campaigns, educational institutes, training schools for church officers, and stewardship programs, are missionaries themselves of the very greatest usefulness. They do their work in harmony with the dictum ascribed to Moody: "It is better to set ten men to work than to do the work of ten men." Financial assistance there must be, of course. An investment in a living salary for a capable pastor, or a contribution or loan toward a new building, often means success when without it failure would be inevitable. But there

is no help so sure as that which helps people to help themselves. Economic independence is as valuable in producing self-respecting churches as it is in developing self-respecting individuals.

The problems of the city afford a striking illustration of the helplessness of the churches without strong, statesmanlike leadership. Municipal city planning has had great influence in pointing out the need for church city planning. Not only the city and its unit neighborhoods but the city as a whole, set in its environs, must be considered; the city of today, to be sure, but also the city of tomorrow; the people as a whole in their corporate and composite life, but also the people as varied groups who make up this vast aggregation. Religious opportunity must be equalized. Areas of privilege and areas of deterioration must be brought together in an exchange of Christian brotherhood. Resources and leadership must become fluid for application where needed. Variety of human need must be matched with diversity of missionary operation. This means greatly varied types of churches. To state the case is to argue as cogently as it is possible to do so for strong, wise, cooperative missionary leadership. This is a call for comity on a much more constructive basis than that in which the word is usually understood. Comity for the churches must mean not merely keeping out of each other's way, but planning constructively and cooperatively to bring all the re-

sources of the church to bear on the total need of the community.

There is promising incidental development in modern home mission practice in the rise of departments of church architecture. Many a monstrosity would have been prevented and a building of beauty would be standing in its place if this help could have come earlier. And it is frequently found that it costs no more to have a beautiful and well-ordered church building than to have one that is repellent and unsuited to modern ministries.

The functions of home missions also include provision in handicapped areas and among underprivileged groups for "those institutions and services which are the necessary elements of a Christian standard of living, to the end that the Christian community life may be developed." Schools and hospitals, homes for children, Christian social centers, are common agencies for building community life. What the state or the municipality cannot do, in that it is weak in economic capacity or social sympathy, home missions can and must do, at least until needs can be met through public service. A case in point is Negro education.

From the days of emancipation to the present hour, a friendly ministry of helpfulness and hope has been carried forward for the Negro race through schools of all grades—primary, grammar, high, college, and postgraduate. Their influence in helping that race to

achieve its present high place economically and culturally in American life has been incalculable. Elementary and secondary education in the South has made rapid advancement in recent years, and this development is raising the question as to whether mission boards should not be turning over such work to the state. Already the elementary schools have been largely surrendered. Ultimately the state aims to provide adequate educational opportunities for all its children. As yet, however, the provision for high school training for Negro students is inadequate in all but one or two states. What this type of school has done in the past to produce Negro leadership is sufficient argument for its continuance. In the words of the Home Missions Congress, "there never was an hour since freedom came to the Negro when the Negro college was more needed than just now." Particularly is there need for the better training of Negro youth for the ministry. Sixteen hundred men are required every year to fill Negro pulpits, while not more than a hundred are graduated annually with full college and seminary training. Investments in personality are the most profitable investments.

Likewise in the work of home missions for Indians the challenge of change is impressive. New conditions are rapidly revolutionizing Indian missionary work. The society of an industrial and machine age has affected them as it has the rest of us. Particularly do the

Indian young people need help. They are confused and baffled. What shall they do as their grandfathers' customs become impossible for them and they are not yet able to understand the white man's life? From day or boarding schools these Indian youth are suddenly plunged into a civilization for which white children have been prepared through the generations. Mr. Charles J. Rhoads, Indian Commissioner, helps us to appraise the enormity of this change when he says, "It is a good deal as though one of our children were given to the Arabian Mohammedans living in the desert, in strange houses, eating unaccustomed food, speaking a new language, worshiping a new God. The sudden transfer from one environment to another necessitates a complete adjustment to entirely new life experiences on the part of the Indian child." What Indian young people will do after school, how they are to earn a living in the white man's society, how they will adjust themselves to town or city life, are critical questions just now which call for a broad and unified program of evangelization and education.

Both in crowded cities and in rural communities there have been established delightful centers of friendliness. The following paragraph from the report of a board that operates many of these community houses suggests the influence exerted by those comparatively new agencies of home missions, the Christian social centers:

The centers are known by the fact that wherever they operate, home life becomes more happy and more helpful. The children are being taught many things of service to the homes. The community spirit is lifted to a higher level. The people are taught to seek the betterment of their own neighborhood, and nationalities learn to cooperate. Child life is enriched and made safer. Juvenile delinquency is distinctly on a decline where there are Christian centers. The American element of the city, through contact with the center, are made to appreciate the foreign element a little more, and their active cooperation for community betterment is secured. In other words, the centers help America assimilate its foreign population. Perhaps the most important phase of the whole situation is the fact that the foreign-born are helped to a more friendly and correct interpretation of Protestantism in America. The Christian center presentation of Christian truth and brotherly love is unique and convincing, and many of a shattered Christian faith have their faith restored to them, with a new note of understanding and love of God.

This type of social work has an established place in home mission policy among both foreign-speaking and English-speaking people in large and small cities. Social conditions have been changed and social legislation secured through their influence. They have also served as "listening posts" through which the churches have learned to know not only how the other half lives but how it thinks. As community institutions more and more provide the ministries essential to the everyday welfare of the people, the demand for these neighborly houses grows less. But the fraternal help-

fulness extended by the churches through these centers will continue to be of the greatest value as a part of the full-rounded ministry of the church.

On Social Frontiers

That final objective of home missions, "To bring the Christian impulse to bear upon the broad social and civic questions of the day," opens up a vast field which hitherto has scarcely been entered. Technical questions as to how the churches may with propriety deal with civic and economic questions still await a satisfying answer, but there is no question as to the need of bringing the Christian spirit to bear upon them.

There were a good many things the traveler from Samaria could not do, that day when he found the dying man on the Jericho road. But there were some urgent things to be done which he could do immediately. He could administer first aid; he could show a sympathetic interest; he could find a man with technical skill to carry forward the work he had begun. But if he were to find a situation like this on every trip, and if he were wise as well as good, he would see the need of something more. He would discover that back of the task of helping the individual was a more difficult and important task of social inquiry and reconstruction. For example, he would recommend better police protection, but that would not be the fundamental issue. Why are there bandits? The whole

social situation needs to be studied to discover the source from which the outbreaking evils arise. The church through the centuries has been taking the rôle of Good Samaritan in manifold works of mercy, and in these days the spirit of good-will is more essential than ever. But the complex and delicate organization of modern society calls for much more than works of mercy. The Christian spirit must call to its aid the best scientific and technical knowledge. The church is the natural lead in every movement that involves the protection and enrichment of personality and the building of brotherhood. Like the Good Samaritan, it will find the men and the agencies that are competent to enable love to "abound more and more in knowledge and all discernment."

As Good Samaritans, home missions are interested in such developments as now endanger the economic independence of Alaskan Eskimos. Some years ago, through public subscription taken by five great newspapers and by appropriation of public monies by the Congress of the United States, reindeer were introduced into Alaska with the announced purpose of safeguarding the Eskimos against famine as well as providing an employing industry. This was a practical measure to give needed economic aid and at the same time promote self-respect and build character. It appears that large commercial interests have been trying to secure virtual control of these reindeer herds, although such

control would mean that the Eskimos would be deprived of the salutary effects of ownership as well as of the opportunity of supporting themselves by their own efforts. Exploitation in our time uses different tools from the crude implements employed on the Jericho road, that is all. They who have the spirit of the Good Samaritan will need to be wise and efficient in dealing with the more respectable but even more harmful ways of wholesale banditry.

As Good Samaritans again, home missions will protest against the unjust and cruel discrimination that race prejudice creates. Said the Washington congress, brought face to face with a persistent problem:

> We who send many thousands of dollars and many missionaries to India because we have been spurred to action by what to us is an outrageous caste system, fail to remember that there is a very striking psychological similarity between the silly caste system of India and the inexcusable race prejudice of America. . . . To deny justice and fair play to an American because of color or race is as pagan as the caste distinctions of India are unchristian. . . . The church must take a pronounced stand on the question of fairness and justice to the Negro as an American citizen. Unless this step be taken, it is now plainly evident that the more intelligent Negro will lose confidence in the type of Christianity which American Protestantism seeks to promote.

Recalling a still older misrepresentation of Jesus, the congress cried out in his name for fraternal treatment for his brothers:

We call upon all churches and Christians to oppose anti-Semitism in every form and all unjust discrimination against Jews. . . . We urge Christians in the preparation of current literature and teaching material and in their public pronouncements and personal conversation, to avoid expressions which might develop misunderstanding of the Jews and wrong attitudes toward them. . . . In facing the question of our relations as Christians to the Jewish people, we recognize the tragedy of history. Centuries of prejudice, injustice, and persecution by people who have professed the Christian name have hidden the face of the greatest Jew of history from his own people.

Looking toward the Southwest, the congress was moved to make a similar plea:

Since race prejudice is the greatest obstacle to our home mission work and very seriously retards our efforts to evangelize the Spanish-speaking peoples in our midst, we most urgently call upon our American churches to manifest a greater Christian spirit in their personal contacts with the Mexican immigrant.

And it again raised the voice of Christian protest against a legislative act that not only disturbs domestic friendliness but is of the sort out of which international conflicts grow:

It is our strong conviction that the discriminatory legislation in our immigration law, which is a great hindrance to our Christian work and an obstacle to international peace, should be changed so that equal and just treatment may be extended to all the peoples of the world.

Home missions in America are concerned over every impact of our nation upon other countries. They have

a wider horizon than the continental boundaries. Their interminglings with the tasks of foreign missions are so intimate and so extensive that the protest of Dr. John R. Mott against the terms "home" and "foreign" as having become obsolete and misleading characterizations of the common kingdom enterprise, meets with earnest approval. Home missions are of necessity in perpetual protest against all those social and economic and racial expressions of national selfishness and provincialism that continue to flout the gospel of universal brotherhood and to kindle the fires of sectional and international ill-will. The Good Samaritan will not have technical knowledge sufficient to deal with all of these complicated problems. He cannot, however, be content until he has introduced the spirit of brotherly sympathy into the situation, and brought in the men who can weave that spirit into the fabric of national life.

Home missions are beginning to have a clearer vision as to what the way of Christ requires in human relationships. In the realm of international affairs this vision demands that we restudy the moral values involved in tariffs, immigration laws, international commerce, cooperation in international welfare agencies, courts of justice, associations created to develop understanding and good-will; that we study how to restrain international bullies and exploiters, and how to outlaw war. This process raises a series of highly controversial

political and economic questions. We would not make the pulpit or the church an agency of partisan politics, but it is suicidal for the church to abdicate its position of prophetic utterance in any sphere where fellowship is involved. The church is not a specialist in economics or politics, but it has its own far more important specialty, the creation of fellowship. It must therefore demand that all questions that affect human life shall be studied and action taken on the basis not of national partisanship but of universal fellowship.

All who would promote the Christian way of life must rebuke by voice and vote any leader, any political party, any commercial system, any industrial group, laboristic or capitalistic, that sacrifices the fellowship of all mankind for the sake of group or national or personal gain. There is real peril for the peace of the world in the stirring up of the military spirit and the promotion of military preparedness, along with a persistent policy of national aloofness, at a time when the world's need is the creation of an instrument of international arbitration to provide for the security of the weakest and the peace of all. We may reject Christ's way of world peace and world fellowship and accept nationalism and selfishness and force as our ideals, but we have no right to do this and at the same time assume to be Christian, either as individuals or as a nation. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

Home missions organizations must give the churches guidance and help in dealing with these great and urgent questions of national and international policy.

But we are getting rather far from the common tasks of multiform, diversified, and fragmentary home missions. If we are out for such far-reaching transformations as these, we shall have to abandon our plurals at once. Home missions acting as more or less scattered bits of evangelism or education or philanthropy are not competent to grapple with the complex giant forces of modern life. Only when they have become in deed and reality the home mission of the whole church—and this can only be effected by courageous, cooperative churchmanship—can we cast out the demons and subdue the principalities and powers with which the forces of Christianity must contend.

CHAPTER IV

HOME MISSIONS IS . . .

IT DOES not sound quite right nor does it look just right—the phrase, "Home missions is." Certainly home missions historically are diverse. Chronologically, denominationally, functionally, home missions are multiform. But this is not the whole truth. Home missions are on the way to become the home mission of the churches, so far on the way, in fact, that even now we may begin to say that home missions is an entity.

In order to understand both the urge for unity and the tenacity of denominational loyalties, we might consider a little of the underlying philosophy of home missions, including some of its legitimate limitations as well as some of its alluring aims.

The Lord loves variety. He sets the forces of nature at work and they clothe the meadows with garments of grass, not two blades of which are alike. He plants a million acres of forests and the trees cover themselves with leaves, each after its kind but no one leaf precisely like any other. He peoples the earth with human beings, all different in appearance and in personality. The further we explore life, the more varied we find

it. Setting men's minds at work in a world with so many possibilities open in science and medicine and education and art, God must surely expect different points of view to emerge among them, resulting often in distinct schools of thought and action. Standardization is no law of nature; it runs squarely against the grain of nature. Variant religious views and experiences are not to be wondered at. We ought at least to be accustomed to the idea of their existence, since the variations are almost as old as religion itself. Right down through the Old Testament runs the clear line of cleavage between the priestly and the prophetic approach to God, not to speak of the distinct emphases given by the singer, the statesman, the sage and the saint.

Almost before the gospel passed beyond the boundaries of Palestine, two parties developed in the apostolic church, with Paul and Peter as the chief spokesmen of the sounder positions, Barnabas wabbling a bit between the two, and a noisy company of Antinomians on one hand and Judaizers on the other, embarrassing the leaders of the church and confusing the minds of simpler folk. But man being what he is, it is not quite easy to see how the situation could have been otherwise. The centuries of Catholic unity did not quite succeed in showing the world one holy Catholic church. Divergencies were continually appearing whose authors and defenders were either incorporated

somehow into church life and thought, or were vigorously opposed and cruelly though not quite completely suppressed. And then came the Reformation. The new privilege of thinking and acting in religious affairs with some freedom was irresistible. Whatever and however religious and economic and social elements entered and mingled to produce the disruption of the church and the scattering of the flock into separate folds, at the bottom of it all was the inherent tendency of life to find free and distinctive forms of expression.

Perhaps the serious mistake, if one were to put it no more strongly, was to feel that divergent opinions and experiences called for separatist organizations for their expression. It was so much easier to quarrel and separate than to remain together "agreed to differ but resolved to love." But it would have been so much better to find, through patient and prayerful thinking and living, a sufficiently roomy faith and organization to make a home for all who had a common trust through Jesus Christ in God the Father, and a common concern for the coming of the kingdom of heaven on earth. Within such an inclusive religious structure the members might have exercised individual freedom to their heart's content, and at the same time pioneered their way into a larger life than the exponents of a more restricted ecclesiastical system could ever find.

For undoubtedly the Lord loves unity. He put some-

thing into his creation, as scientists have been discovering and reporting through the years, which forbids our believing in a divided or conflicting cosmos. The structure of the remotest star rests on the same elements of which the earth is made. The laws of light and matter and motion are universal. It lies beyond the range of science to prove purpose, but it has discovered a cosmos in which universal purpose is seen to be at home. There is something in the mind of man that will not let him rest content with a fragmentary existence. The whole story of philosophy is the history of the quest of the mind for a unifying principle, not only in human life but in all creation. That which is highest and noblest in man has from the first insisted that there must be for all creation some central unifying thought. There is something inescapable for the Christian about the demand for unity. The philosopher no less than the scientist is held by the conviction that we live in a universe.

The poets, like the philosophers, believe in and seek the ultimate unification of all life in a majestic plan and purpose. Tennyson declares his faith in

> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves.

The Christian prophet proclaims his belief that through the unification of life there may be realized a lofty

ideal that springs out of the very being of God. Says Paul: "There is one body and one spirit . . . one hope . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all." Of that unity Christ is the symbol and the seal: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God into a full-grown man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

And back of the apostle stood his Master, making the same plea, presenting as no other teacher had ever done this noble conception of universal, divine, fatherly love, declaring his central and inclusive aim to be the establishing of a brotherhood of man, a kingdom of heaven on earth. Jesus' prayer for the oneness of his followers, his radical break with the past in insisting that fellowship was worth more than form as an expression of religion, and Paul's vehement protest against the beginning of sectarianism in the church at Corinth, all bear testimony to the profound place that the quest for unity has in the Christian conception of life's ultimate values and aim. It crowns the long search of philosophy for a unifying principle and center.

The Lord loves diversity, and mankind detests uniformity. But the Lord is working out a purpose of unity, and man at his profoundest and best agrees that it is good. How liberty and unity may dwell together

is one of the old intellectual and moral problems with which the mind of man has grappled. Apparently the two coalesce in the mind of God, and it is our faith that they can dwell together in peace in the life of man. Here we are, nineteen hundred years after Pentecost, struggling with this old problem. We are convinced that there must be a fuller and more impressive testimony to the centrality of Christ's ideal of fellowship in the Christian way of expressing religion, and we deplore the sectarian rivalry and controversy which have resulted in so much waste and which hinder the full and effective use of our missionary resources. But always we run head on into this stubborn law of nature and especially of human nature that compels diversity and variation and will not tolerate standardization and uniformity. And everywhere we find that we cannot break a natural law; we can only break ourselves upon this law, and break also our symmetrical schemes for making people think and feel and act alike.

We are thus brought face to face with practical and urgent questions in missionary administration. How much unification is enough? How far ought we to go in dissociating plural verbs from home missions? Certainly there is a limit, but certainly we have not yet approached that limit. We have gone fairly fast and relatively far in the last few decades. Whatever unhappy survivals of an older day may persist, there is

abundant reason to rejoice in the achievement of not only a considerable tolerance but of courtesy and comity and charity and brotherliness and cooperation in good works, and oftentimes of a fair approximation of that spiritual unity in the bond of peace for which Paul pleads. Without further cooperation and more unity, the fulfillment of the home mission task of the church as defined by the congress is quite impossible: "The home mission of the church we would define as the effort in the spirit of Christ and in fulfillment of his great commission to win to Christian discipleship the people of North America and to Christianize the life of our nations. This task our home mission agencies share with all the Christian forces of our lands."

The tendency in intradenominational organization is to get away from the pronounced pluralism of the past. We offer an illustration from one denomination of what is taking place in many. This denomination at one time had separate societies dealing with education that are now unified under the name of the Educational Boards. In its extension work one organization looked after the support of pastors in churches, another provided buildings, a third promoted Sunday schools. Now all these organizations are working together under the name of the Church Extension Boards. The latest step has brought all the home-land work, including church extension, education, work among Negroes and Indians and other underprivileged

people, ministerial pensions, even, under one management known as the Home Board of Directors, with subcommittees to deal with the different phases of the one complete task. Many home mission organizations were by such means reduced first to four and then to one.

The Turn of the Tide

The organization of the Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions marked the beginning of a new home mission era, and initiated a still larger unifying process that has gone steadily forward.

The purpose of the Home Missions Council is simple and innocent enough to secure the allegiance of those who desire very little unification. Any missionary organization of any religious denomination doing work of general scope in the United States or Canada may become a member, and the purpose is to promote fellowship, conference, and cooperation among member organizations. The Council is flexible enough, both as regards the number of its constituent organizations and the scope of its work, to allow for such expansion as the members may desire and changing conditions may demand, and the record of this expansion has been gratifying.

The Council of Women for Home Missions in a similar way brings the women's boards and societies to-

gether. Its objective is to unify their efforts by consultation and by cooperation in action. It represents Protestant church women in national movements which are promoted interdenominationally, such as the annual Conference on the Cause and Cure of War. It has carried forward an increasing educational work through study courses, institutes, conferences and schools of missions. For the past decade it has produced all its study books in partnership with the Missionary Education Movement, the medium through which a large number of denominational boards of both home and foreign missions have cooperated since 1902 in planning and publishing materials for church groups of all ages and grades on the missionary enterprise throughout the world. The Council also promotes local women's interdenominational groups which carry on a wide variety of activities. A prayer fellowship of enlarging proportions and influence has been developed by it during the years, which now has become literally worldwide. The World Day of Prayer, the first Friday in Lent, is observed by two thousand interdenominational groups in the United States, in eight hundred communities in Canada, and in forty-five other countries of the world. In the promotion of the World Day of Prayer, as well as in leadership training and many other activities, the Council works in effective cooperation with the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions of North Amer-

ica. Through the Council the boards function together in actual missionary and Christian social service; for example, among migrant family groups, and, in cooperation with the Home Missions Council, in providing directors of religious education in government Indian schools. It studies proposed legislation and takes appropriate action on such subjects as child labor, international relations, and Indian affairs.

The two Home Missions Councils worked for many years in such close cooperation with each other and with the Federal Council of Churches that in 1920 a desire was expressed for something more than cooperation. The result was the initiation in 1924 of conference by the three organizations to consider closer cooperation and possible consolidation. Two years later they were all housed under one roof. While no organic union was effected, the relationship is so close that duplication of effort has been eliminated, and the intimate contacts now made possible mean an essentially unified program.

The progress of the last two decades from "home missions are" to "home missions is" practically coincides with the story of the work of the two Home Missions Councils. A home mission week was planned and widely observed, November 17-24, 1912. A united missionary campaign, September, 1914, to May, 1916, overleaped even the traditional boundary between home and foreign missions. A Bureau of Reference for Mi-

grating People was created by the councils, and a competent leader appointed to correlate, particularly at Ellis Island, the work for immigrants as carried on by thirty-nine societies and fifty-six missionaries—home missions conspicuously plural here! A united approach through joint committees was likewise begun in work for Indians, for Spanish-speaking people, for Negroes. Outstanding among these unifying processes was that directed toward the better adjustment of forces in town and country communities, and a corresponding united attack upon the problem of the city. In this united work of the councils, most of all, home missions is becoming a common cause.

Surveys were begun and field studies made by which community need could be dealt with in its entirety. Competitive conditions existing in Colorado were first disclosed, conditions that were later seen to obtain widely throughout the country. This was followed by a more ambitious project. In order to learn what were the unmet needs of the two northern tiers of states west of the Mississippi, a group of representative board leaders made a cooperative journey of over nine thousand miles, and held consultations with local leaders in thirteen states at fifteen different points. By this first-hand process facts were ascertained, survey plans initiated, and cooperative education promoted. The actual distribution of the churches was discovered, and the state of mind both of the board leaders and of the

field representatives was disclosed. There followed state surveys and allocation of unoccupied fields. As a direct result of this intimate fellowship, a conference of all evangelical workers for Spanish-speaking Americans in the United States was planned and held, Oriental work among the denominations was allocated, and a commission was formed to organize and supervise work in lumber camps. It is not too much to say that this particular journey to the Western states marked a turning point in home missions in that section of the country, and continues to be productive of results tangible and intangible that are making mightily for unification. The Utah plan, for example, which included a state interdenominational commission, a council of home mission workers meeting semiannually, and an annual workers' institute of three or more days, came six years after the Colorado survey and as a direct result of it.

An Every-Community Service Endeavor, commonly known as the Montana plan because it was first put into effect in that state, is another of the significant expressions of the new unifying spirit, and came seven years after the famous journey and as its most significant fruitage. In a statement on "A National Program in Home Missions," it was declared by a group of leaders that "the evils of sectarian friction and duplication are deplored by all who labor for the advancement of the kingdom of God in American society and abroad. . . .

The home mission and church extension policies of our several denominations often determine or strongly influence the local conditions which perpetuate these evils. . . . Every consideration of constructive and forward-looking church statesmanship requires the marshalling of resources in far-reaching cooperative programs." A Joint Conference Committee on Home Missions was called to consider the "organization of a comprehensive national program in home missions and church extension through the realignment of existing agencies, through inter-board committees or commissions, or otherwise as may be found desirable and feasible"; and further, the "institution by this means of home mission and church extension policies and methods which shall encourage and assist churches to organize their work so as to serve the entire community."

When ten years of Christian cooperation in the Northwest were celebrated in 1929 on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Montana Home Missions Council, it was found that there were most encouraging tangible results. In Montana every community had been definitely assigned, by mutual consent, to some one of the cooperating boards. Thirty-four church consolidations were on record, twenty-two denominational community churches were to be found in county seats, notable larger parishes had been formed, and various interchurch activities developed, including col-

leges, hospitals, and the maintenance of a resident pastor at the state university.

Aspiration for unity soared still higher in the creation of the Associated Evangelical Churches of Alaska. It was hoped by the far-seeing executives who promoted this step that it might be possible through a central committee to consider the needs of Alaska as a whole, allocate responsibility, advise the boards in regard to appropriations, and perhaps ultimately administer missionary work in Alaska as a unit. These hopes were only partially realized. They are now being revived through the work of a joint committee of the two Home Mission Councils, to which has been definitely assigned responsibility for such studies, adjustments, and assignments of unoccupied territory as are required. The principal boards operating in Alaska have already gone far toward the creation of a unified administration of their work.

Ministries of Mercy

Missionary work for migrant peoples is another illustration of joint administration. While the general boards continue to carry on separate pieces of work, it is done without competition. The women's boards have pooled their resources. Through the Council of Women they have been working together for a decade in a Christian social service program. Employers cooperate in many places in carrying on demonstration

centers which are a combination of day nursery, daily vacation Bible school, health center and playground. Further expansion carried the work to the Pacific coast, and extended its ministry to include larger community interests. This is a fine example of a home mission enterprise in which denominational differences have no part, and from which any hope of material return is absent. It is simply service in the name of Christ, and as such has its rich and abiding reward.

In bringing Christ to the Indian people home missions are again becoming a home mission of the churches. A joint committee from the councils is entrusted by the separate boards with certain administrative duties. Cooperation in this field was long overdue; lack of harmony among missionary forces wasted money and effort, and bewildered the Indians. Worse still, it produced among the Indians factions which added greatly to the difficulties involved in administering their affairs. The members of the Home Missions Congress will never forget the moving words of that talented young Indian woman, Mrs. Ruth Muskrat Bronson: "You have foisted on us your own narrowness and prejudices and antagonisms too many times when you thought you were bringing us Christ. . . . If it were only differences of opinion we could understand those, for we have differences of opinion among ourselves; but we cannot understand how, in a religion of love, there can be antagonisms and bitterness and

rivalry. We can understand how there may be many roads leading to one destination, for we have those all over our reservations; but we cannot believe that only one road leads us to that destination, and all the others lead us off aimlessly into the marshlands."

If we are to wipe out the old stain upon national religious life which this country's treatment of the Indians has made to shame us before Christ and the world, there must be a positive concerted movement among us which sectarianism can never supply. Here, fortunately, a fine beginning has been made. The joint committee is now administering an important work of religious education in behalf of both the general and the women's boards engaged in Indian work. The boards furnish directors of religious education in a number of government boarding-schools and give assistance in others, but in all cases the board workers are interdenominationally supervised and directed.

A new advance in cooperation is being made through the organization under the two councils of a service committee on Indians. The leading home mission boards are working together for understanding and better relations between missionaries and government workers. The United States Board of Indian Commissioners now for the first time includes a missionary among its members. There has not been in recent years a more favorable outlook than there is at present for the development of a cooperative program in

behalf of the common task of the government Indian service and the missionaries. That the mission boards shall go on to much larger cooperative administration was emphatically requested by the Home Missions Congress in two resolutions. These call for the selection of a specific field for the demonstration of comity and cooperation in Indian work, and urge the boards to "face courageously the steps necessary to consolidate the work on significant fields, to reinforce it on others, and to begin the new pieces of work needed." The response of the boards to both resolutions will be convincing evidence of their will to work together.

In the Spanish American field of home missions, cooperation is going forward in a unified administration. A good start was made at the time that Porto Rico came under the flag of the United States. Division of territory was made, followed by the creation of an effective federation for joint action. Now a religious weekly paper, a theological seminary, and a summer conference for Christian workers are conducted under the direction of the Evangelical Union, composed of seven Evangelical bodies. Early in 1931 a union church, the Evangelical Church of Porto Rico, was formed, in which are included the Christian, Congregational and United Brethren bodies. As might be expected, no other field has shown such rapid growth as Porto Rico during the past decade, and nowhere else is the field so fully occupied. In Cuba, too, mis-

sionary responsibility has been divided among the operating churches, but interdenominational cooperation has never prospered in Cuba as it has in Porto Rico. Mission workers in Cuba rarely meet for conference, and the promotion of union enterprises has proved difficult.

Santo Domingo affords an illustration of advanced interdenominational administration. A cooperative movement was begun in 1919 which has attracted wide attention. The discovery that several missionary boards were planning simultaneously to begin work in the island led to a special study undertaken by the secretary of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. He reported a plan for joint administration which was promptly accepted, and a Board for Christian Work in Santo Domingo was created through which five mission boards are working together. The separate appropriations that are made are expended under the direction of the united committee. Suitability for the work rather than denominational affiliation determines the selection of workers. Santo Domingo is a conspicuous illustration of how a passion for the home mission of the church leads to the unification of its varied and competing home missions.

Nowhere else within the field of American missionary work is the call for united missions more urgent than in the West Indies. The social and economic transformation of these islands is going forward rapidly

under the influence of American capital. Once owning and operating their own lands, the people of Porto Rico have now largely become day laborers, helpless to order their own economic life. That which has come to pass in Porto Rico is proceeding rapidly in Cuba, and beginning in Haiti and Santo Domingo. Unless the spirit of Christ intervenes, our industrial system, with its mechanistic methods, its mass psychology, and its indifference to the personal life, will here do its deadly work.

At the Storm Center

When we were considering plural aspects of home missions, we dealt with church extension as one of the oldest functions of mission boards. It is in this field that the unifying process is becoming conspicuous. Home missions is beginning to deal with the highly complicated and increasingly exasperating issues growing out of outdated sectarian rivalry.

Here particularly the issue of freedom versus control arises. Freedom can itself become an enemy of progress. The claim of independence must often bow to the demands of interdependence in so complicated and crowded a world as that in which we now live. The recent census shows a further marked increase of urban population in the last ten years, which means that more churches must be provided in the city at the same time that adjustments must be made in the villages and open

country where the population which has fed the city has been depleted. But the problem is far less simple than this statement would show. The newcomers to the city are not commonly concentrated in new real estate developments and suburbs. They find homes everywhere, replacing people who move on to new homes in the city or in some cases move out to the country. The interminable movement of population within the city itself, with conditions disturbed further by factors of race and language, makes the extension work of the church immensely perplexing and difficult, and demands a larger common strategy than unrelated denominational systems can develop. The relocating of old churches and the combination of competing churches becomes as urgent as the proper location of churches in new communities, and far more difficult.

Criticisms of denominational competition and waste have been heard for many years. They have to do mostly with rural and village communities. Sometimes they have been disregarded because the critics were thought not to be speaking out of accurate knowledge. The response of the Washington congress to the challenge was unequivocal. Indeed the problem itself has outgrown any possible opportunist solution. Piecemeal thinking, local treatment, traditional technique, are utterly inadequate. Sectarianism is not only unchristian, it is incompetent. Large-statured and courageous missionary statesmanship is required. For the

problem in both city and country involves essential elements of Christianity, as well as some of the most powerful currents of modern life.

In spite of the shortcomings of the past, home mission work for English-speaking people shows a most interesting development away from intolerance, through appreciation and cooperation, toward comity and unity. Considering the diversity of our religious origins and the vast proportions attained by Christian organization in America, the wonder is that we have as much religious unity as exists today. The churches of America have conducted an experiment for the world in developing the possibility and power of a free church in a free state. They have solved the problem of self-support, and are developing and supporting extensive educational, philanthropic and missionary institutions.

But the question has become insistent as to whether "competitive drift" must not now be succeeded by "cooperative intention." The laissez-faire policy which has become impossible as an economic policy seems to be equally out of date in religious life and organization. The Cleveland Comity Conference, the five-year program of survey and adjustment, and the Home Missions Congress speak eloquently of a new fraternal conscience and purpose. The commission of the congress dealing with comity and cooperation made suggestions as to practical procedure. There should be, it

said, an attempt made to discover what types of mission work can be best done as cooperative enterprises. Certain areas might be chosen for definite and intensive experimentation over a period of years. The statement of principles and procedures as approved by overhead organizations should be carried to the smaller ecclesiastical units in order to create support on the part of the whole constituency of the churches, that they may encourage and support their denominational leaders in cooperative efforts.

The congress itself declared its approval of interdenominational comity agreements, and urged the denominations to prevent repetition of the unhappy experiences of the past. To make this policy effective, it urged the church boards to set up comity committees "to which shall be referred all cases where aid is requested for a new church enterprise in any community where another Evangelical church is maintaining an organization, and to study all enterprises now receiving aid." It further suggested that "in all cases where the principles of comity, recognized by the Home Missions Council, are ignored by the representatives of any denomination . . . a full record of such cases be placed on file with the Home Missions Council, with the understanding that they be reported in the current bulletins and reports of the Home Missions Council and given such wider publicity as the judgment of the Home Missions Council may determine."

A course of procedure in making church adjustments in communities of one thousand inhabitants or less looking toward a single church organization was approved by the adoption of the following principles:

The primacy of the community interests and the rights and affections of the smaller groups as well as of the larger.

That the church should be so formed, and its affairs so conducted, that in all things local it will work towards a single church consciousness, while in its outside affiliations it shall observe such missionary objectives and fellowship interests as continue to enlist the affection of the membership.

That it shall show sacred regard for the ceremonies, customs, or sacraments through which the several groups have been wont to express themselves, making suitable arrangements for their continuance.

That its affiliations shall be such as, on the one hand, will not interfere with the development of a single church consciousness and a new community ideal, and, on the other, will keep it in touch with the going order of Christendom and in harmony with those ideals and convictions which, through the generations, have become contributions of worldwide value.

The two Home Missions Councils, supported by the Cleveland Comity Conference, the Home Missions Congress, and many home mission boards, has declared:

A field shall be regarded as adequately occupied when, for each thousand population, homogeneous as to language and color and reasonably accessible from a given point, there is present one church meeting at least the following minimum standard of service and equipment:

Resident pastor devoting full time to work of the ministry;
Public worship every Sabbath;
Sunday school meeting regularly;
Edifice reasonably adequate to needs of the community for worship, religious training and service;

provided that where a church has or is proposed to have the exclusive occupancy of a field, it will receive in Christian fellowship all varieties of Evangelical Christians without subjecting them to doctrinal or other tests which do not accord with the standards of their respective faiths.

A conspicuous illustration of a new recognition on the part of denominational organizations of the need for community churches of a type that will make them acceptable to varying religious requirements is reported from Watertown, Massachusetts. A precedent for the country has been established there through interdenominational support of a valuable suburban enterprise. The West Watertown church has been given official recognition by a number of the state denominational organizations. The Baptist State Convention and the Congregational Conference each granted a loan of five thousand dollars toward the church building fund, to which an Episcopalian later added two thousand.

Another constructive measure is being employed which promises to help the rural church fulfill its mission, and offers a further sign of home mission unification. It is the larger parish plan. A larger parish is a group of churches, of the same or different denomina-

tions, which cooperate in a common program for an entire section. Warren H. Wilson says of the larger parish that it "gives a minister a big enough job to dignify him. It makes possible a specialized ministry by two or three men and a woman working on a common job but having separate assignments. It satisfies the desire many ministers have to serve a whole community without denominational competition. It permits the development of institutional service which a certain type of minister desires. It makes possible a social program; indeed it necessitates one. For when a minister or ministers serve all the people on an area of land, they are required logically, and in fact they are compelled, to serve all the spiritual interests of the people."

Malcolm Dana, another enthusiastic believer in the larger parish, sees in it the remedy for the most grievous ills of rural church and social life. His statement of larger parish principles is as follows:

Town and country realize their interdependence and cooperate in securing for each other equal social, economic, and religious privileges.

Communities, neighborhoods, and churches pool their resources so that together they can obtain a ministry, program, and equipment which no one of them might get alone.

People of different races and creeds associate together in a religious fellowship where churches include all and exclude none, and subordinate doctrinal tests to those of Christian discipleship.

Ministers and people formulate and administer plans and programs by means of a larger parish council composed of delegates representing every cooperating neighborhood and church.

A multiple ministry of trained specialists with departmental work seeks to discover, mobilize, train and use local leadership.

Service is rendered over areas as well as churches, reaching out with a maximum of effort to minister to every person living in the open country.

Selfish interests are forgotten, and churches cooperate in putting first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Verily, the kingdom is coming, and home mission administrators are among its prophets.

The Whole Church in Action

Perhaps the most striking aspect of what we may call the singularizing of our plural home missions is found in the fading of the line between the home mission activities of boards and the similar, and as we now see equally missionary, work of unaided churches. Home missions began as a natural and inevitable geographical expansion of the church, inevitable because of a passion for Christ and for the souls of men. There were at first no organizations and no funds, but earnest men conquered the frontier and established little churches, laying the foundation for the larger organized movement to come. The new home missions frontier must be captured in the same way. Organization can assist greatly, to be sure; but the one thing needful is the

natural expansion of every church from its own center, under the compulsion of the love of Christ and concern for the sorrows and sins of men. Home missions is the whole church in action to save America. The idea that a church is fulfilling its mission when it has opened its doors and bidden men come to worship and find social fellowship, and the idea that a church can discharge its home missionary obligation by proxy through sending money to some mission board, must both be abandoned. Home missions is contributions and board administration and local churches in direct action; and the greatest of these is the church at work. In any large meaning of the term, home missions can neither be confined to the giving of money nor limited to the churches that require financial aid. Counsel and service are needed, and the self-supporting churches may not be left out. Home mission leaders must be men and women who are able to help all the churches to discover and pursue broad policies through which the total work of Christianizing America may find effective expression. Particularly in the field of social ministry, the financially capable churches need help quite as much as, if not indeed more than, do the missionary churches.

Piecemeal efforts to deal with the Christianization of America through isolated missionary projects are being absorbed in the attempt to make a total impact upon American life. This means a new kind of church

and a new Christian strategy. Much of the home mission interest of the past has centered in giving assistance to feeble local congregations for the support of a pastor, or for the erection of a church building, or for providing a missionary or a teacher for neglected people on the frontier or in special race or national groups. As one home missions secretary puts it: "We still have a very great temptation to play up the missionary program by giving the impression that it consists of work among 'queer' people of some sort. . . . I sometimes wish we did not have anything spectacular in the home missionary work, so that we could get the attention of the church on what seems to me to be by far the biggest and in some respects the most important part of our task, namely, the strengthening of the work of the church in communities that are not usually thought of as missionary."

Churches that have been developed by missionary effort have tended to become like the churches which preceded them and to which they owed their existence: self-centered, institutionally minded. The best home mission wisdom is beginning now to say in effect to all of the churches what a conference on "The Church in the Changing City" recently declared to be its conviction concerning some of them: "The time has come when local churches in many downtown districts should be willing, should the interest of the kingdom require, to give up their lives for the larger life of the

community and the greater interests of the kingdom. 'He that would save his life shall lose it, and he that would lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it,' is just as applicable to churches as to individuals. Denominationalism, local church pride of history and tradition, mere personal attachments to buildings and locations, should no longer stand in the way of the larger statesmanship demanded by the changing city." It is imperative that all of the churches shall accept the implications of this larger statesmanship in which the institution is thought of as an agency for the building of the kingdom of God rather than as an end in itself. Facing the larger claims of the kingdom, the spirit of the church must ever be that of John the Baptist saying of Jesus, "He must increase but I must decrease."

One grave hindrance to Christianity is the selfish, clannish, club-like spirit of many of the churches. Interest in religion, we are told, is growing in many countries, at the same time that the decline of the church is being accelerated. Home missions are concerned in the state of the churches as bases of supplies of men and money, as agencies on the mission field through which expansion is carried forward, and as, each in itself, a distinct missionary force. If the churches are feeble or inoperative, the Christianization of American life will languish. This is the ultimate problem, the indispensable agency, and the last word

in missionary advance at home or afar: a vital, effective church.

Quite obviously, unless all of us have been always wrong, the moral and spiritual leadership and power which the present challenging situations in America call for must come through the church. Where else shall we look? To the press? To ask that question is to answer it. The printed page helps, but at the same time it constitutes a grave part of the problem. More doubtful still as a social influence is the theater, though it may be conceded that, for better or worse, the motion picture is almost the foremost influence on the masses today. The moral power is not in the state; the law and its administration are essential to peace and order and well-being, but the state is not a conductor of moral energy. The schools? No one would dispute their value in the making of America. But again, for better or worse, we have deliberately separated religious instruction from public education, and if religion is a real and important factor in the making of personal and national character, we must look for its cultivation to an agency other than the schools.

The churches are set in the midst of our American life for this one purpose—to spiritualize and energize individual life, to enrich personality, to build brotherhood. Not only have they this primary mission, but they have prestige and influence beyond any other in-

stitution in America, as we shall presently see; prestige and influence which have come without official sanction and support, through voluntary attachment and devotion. The hope of America is bound up with the life of its churches.

CHAPTER V

WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN TO THE CHURCHES?

THE ultimate social unit in Christianity is the church. Here is the key to our problem of American and world evangelization. A spiritually efficient church seeking the mind of Christ and doing his will is the ultimate solution of every moral and social problem in American life. Without churches there would have been no permanent Christian movement. After nineteen hundred years the hope of making the world Christian seems still to be bound up with the condition of the churches.

Since the home mission movement was inaugurated and is carried forward by churches; since the founding and nurturing of churches occupies a major place in all home mission programs; and since a large part of the work of making America Christian must be done by the churches directly, without the interposition of any sort of missionary organization, we do well to pause and take a good square look at the church itself. It is the basic home mission problem.

Even though cooperation is a central word in this study, it is not the first word nor the last. Someone

has facetiously expressed his concern as being not so much whether the churches are cooperating as whether they are operating. Here they are, scattered more or less thickly or sparsely all over the United States, well over two hundred thousand of them as reported in the year books, living, dying, dead. They confess to a common aim and purpose, they call themselves churches of Jesus Christ. And few of us can contemplate without a keen sense of sadness and shame the vast disparity between the high claims of our religion and the low level of achievement of our churches.

Since it is a very practical business with which the readers of this book have to do, it may be well to begin not with the general church but with some specific church, your own, let us say. To vitalize your own local church is probably the greatest thing that you can do for home missions. Why is your church? Just what difference would it make if it should cease to be? If it had never been? If there were no churches in your community? The answers to these questions will be found in the answers to another set of questions which grow out of even the most cursory study of the records of the earliest churches. Does your church rest upon vital spiritual experience? Is it a real fellowship? Does it evangelize and train disciples? Does it seek first the kingdom of God?

It is very easy to paint pretty pictures of the ideal church, but even the apostolic churches fell far short

of apostolic dream and desire. What about the actual churches? What is happening to them?

A Nearer View

In the state of California there is a village, now seventy years old, lately studied by the Institute of Social and Religious Research. While it cannot be said to be a typical village (there is in reality none such), it is more or less like other villages in its region. Its population is 2200, mostly American-born, with another 1745 in tributary territory. The village is typical in the respect that it is passing through the throes of change. Its economic, civic and educational life is rapidly advancing to new and high levels; irrigation and cooperative marketing have wrought the change. But the cooperative spirit has failed to include religious and social enterprises. Denominationalism is dominant. There are churches enough—eight, or one for every 275 persons—but only 28.1 per cent of the people over ten years of age are members. When the study was made, four of the churches had resident pastors, two had non-resident pastors, and two were pastorless. The churches' receipts averaged about $2500, and their total membership about 100, only one church having a membership above 160. Business and educational leaders were looking hopefully and moving practically, through union meetings in the school auditorium, toward the establishment of a real community church.

The city church faces quite a different situation and problem from that of the village church. It is to a tired, harried, hurried, blasé, superficial multitude whose popular informational medium is the tabloid daily, and whose perennial and prime pleasure is in moving picture theaters, that the church must somehow come with the vision and the voice of God. It is not strange that churches sometimes feel themselves driven by the competition of the city streets to hang out brilliant lights and blow loud trumpets, if by these means they may arrest and save any of the throng. Surely the city church—downtown or uptown, in industrial section or suburb—has a hard fight on its hands merely to secure attention for its message. How difficult is its real task of healing bruised lives, of stimulating desire for truth and beauty and goodness, of integrating divided personality, of enriching starved souls. It is not only terribly difficult, it is so apparently impossible that one wonders how any group dares undertake it. Without divine resources we are without hope.

Those churches which a generation or two ago were being established with hopeful enthusiasm in growing communities well beyond the borders of the business sections deserve our special consideration. For a quarter of a century and more they have provided the moral and financial foundation for missionary activities near and far. Look at them now. How the communities

have changed! They were formerly populated largely by substantial, well-to-do Protestant families. The developments of the last twenty-five years have meant the vast emigration of the old stock to the suburbs, and the insurgence of an immigrant tide bearing Negroes and foreign-born, Roman Catholics and Jews, and many who are indifferent to organized religion in any form, along with small town and country people unaccustomed to city conditions and uncomfortable in city churches. The population changes have resulted in part from the physical deterioration of the community, a deterioration which has been advanced in turn by the changes themselves, in a vicious circle. Detached houses and homes have given way to new apartment houses, or have been remodeled to accommodate several families or to serve as rooming and boarding houses. The total result is a population perhaps greatly increased in numbers, but greatly diluted so far as Protestant interests go, and greatly depressed as to culture, financial strength, leadership, and traditional American ideals.

Now look at the churches, changing and yet unchanged. In the midst of an altered community stands the unaltered church building. It was erected thirty or forty years ago in accordance with prevailing ideals of church life and work which do not now seem to be wholly appropriate. A large and beautiful building at that time, it is nevertheless poorly adapted to meet

present needs. Not only does the building remain unmodified, except for more or less deterioration, but oftener than otherwise the conception of the church's whole mission and methods remains unmodified, and any adjustment to new conditions, so far from being recommended, is opposed. Sometimes this condition is due to an honest but shortsighted belief that recovery of the old doctrinal emphasis, the old preaching of the old gospel, the old evangelism, the old-fashioned prayer meetings, will bring back what has been lost from the old times.

In some respects, however, the church has greatly changed. The crowds that used to throng the Sunday services are gone. The prayer meeting is a shadow of its former self. It is hard to maintain a Sunday school. The old leadership has passed, the old enthusiasm has waned, a spirit of depression and discouragement often permeates the church activities. Financial burdens grow heavier, for the new members add little financial strength, and the joy of church life and church work departs, leaving only the drudgery which a faithful remnant carries on as best it may.

An additional factor enters into the problem of the churches in these older residential neighborhoods. In former days, before church federation and comity were born, many denominations entered these promising fields and erected their edifices. The strong churches multiplied, with the result that the better fields were

still further subdivided, or new churches were planted on the edges of the older community—there were Protestants enough to go around in those old times. Today most of these buildings still stand, and struggling congregations compete with each other like sheep on barren plains on which one blade of grass grows where once there were not two but ten. Let us hear the story of one of these old city churches.

It began as a Sunday school in the Bedford section of Brooklyn in 1872. This Sunday school flourished and a great church grew up. Thirty-five years ago the church had an enrolled membership of eighteen hundred, and a Sunday school whose average attendance was fourteen hundred. It was a family church in the fullest sense of the word. For the last twenty years, however, conditions in the community have been changing, and the church has declined in attendance and membership and in financial resources, though not in its giving. Many Roman Catholics live in the neighborhood now, and a far larger number of Jews. There is beginning to be a considerable number of Negroes, at least a score of Negro families living within a block of the church, which is the center of a triangle that has three Negro churches at the angles not far away.

Here, then, is a concrete situation: a large building with heavy overhead expenses for repairs, lighting and heating; a declining membership, a diluted population, an increasing sense of pressure due to the alien popu-

lation and the overplus of Protestant organizations, some survival of old ideals with increasing need for new methods, and reduced financial strength coincident with the need of increased expenditure for a suitable community program. Intensive study of American cities shows how waves of human life have rolled from business center to suburban circumference, overturning established institutions and substituting others, emptying churches and sometimes filling them again with worshipers of another race or color, and changing social conditions beyond recognition. No city church knows with assurance that it may not be caught in this current. Most of them will be. It is not an exceptional situation with which we have dealt at so great length.

A Whole Cityful

Let us turn now to New England and take a look at a city which is full of churches—Springfield, Massachusetts. Concerned over the growing problems of the city's church life, various leaders decided to undertake a complete survey of the Springfield churches, with the assistance of the Institute of Social and Religious Research. The survey had to do only with Protestant churches, of which there were sixty-two in a total population of about 150,000. The survey extended through many months. It reviewed the past, scrutinized the present, and tried to glimpse the future. The

outcome was a volume of over four hundred pages, containing data authoritative for Springfield and typical of conditions in cities of the same class. Although the Springfield survey has been frequently cited, some of its conclusions may well be noted here, since there is no later survey of a whole city that is so comprehensive and impressive:

> The worst interpretation that can be put upon the foregoing findings is very bad indeed. It may be said, with some color of justification, that the survey shows Protestantism in Springfield to be an organized religious movement of doubtful success, with incoherent and inefficient units working with poor command of the facts, and deficient in the moral qualities that lie under institutional strength; that the churches are illogically related to the city geographically, having only one common principle consistently followed, namely, to get as far off as possible from the socially undesirable areas.
>
> But such a conclusion ignores a vast mass of favorable evidence. The survey shows in convincing detail the actual growth, progress and varied service of Protestantism. Protestantism's stronger and more progressive elements are far in advance of its mere average, and its best examples are conspicuous for originality and leadership. . . .
>
> On the strict basis of the verified and objective facts, the best interpretation which the survey can put upon the situation is that Springfield Protestantism has a fighting chance. The evidence . . . warrants no more hopeful conclusion than this.

It is hoped that such processes of inquiry may not seem to lead to pessimism, or even be unduly de-

pressing. Perhaps we need to quote here the remark of a wise and conscientious historian: "All my life I have heard of nothing but defeat, and all my life I have seen nothing but progress." We do indeed turn many a sharp corner quite successfully. And yet there is danger in superficial optimism. Radical reconstruction of the ideals and spirit of the church is imperative. No easy solution will suffice. The ultimate goal of home missions is a Christian nation. It is our working hypothesis, at least, that God's chief agency to this end is the churches. By their present standards of ideals and achievement, the situation is not too hopeful. The whole home mission cause is at stake. We must abandon our hypothesis or change the churches if we are to make America part of the kingdom of God.

What, then, must happen to the churches if they are adequately to fulfill their mission in American life? Three things out of many may be mentioned as of prime importance if the churches, both as source and as issue of the missionary enterprise, are to reflect credit upon it and satisfy the Master.

Better Leadership

One major requirement is better leadership. While higher education is not everything, it is for most of us an indispensable condition of strong leadership. The facts that we have been noting as to the educational

qualifications of ministers are at best disturbing and at worst almost appalling. We were noting in an earlier chapter that universal education was one of the significant things that had "happened" to America. Since the beginning of this century, high school enrolment has increased tenfold. Through scores of popular agencies general information has been widely diffused, and the critical and scientific spirit has permeated our thinking. The parson can no longer expect to be important on the ground that he has had a superior education. With meagre education, however, he cannot expect to exercise leadership. The Christian leader in pulpit or classroom today must have had adequate training for the understanding of his times and of the people who are the product of the times. He needs some insight into the problems of economics, politics and international statesmanship for the sake of the human values involved, even though he is not expected to be a specialist in these fields. He has his own field as a specialist. He is a specialist in human relationships, in brotherhood, in the problems of personality, in the Christian way of life. These call for utmost wisdom, for increasing experience, for exceptional ability. To be sure, ministers must fall short of the ideal, since they are human; as one of them remarked to a group of business men who were sharply criticizing, "You know, brethren, God had nothing but laymen out of which to make ministers, and he did his best

with the material he had." But we shall have better churches only when we have developed better ministers.

A distinguished American university president observed bluntly and forcibly concerning education as a requirement for church leadership, "If the full truth were said, it would probably be that the greatest obstacle to religious faith, religious conviction, and religious worship is the attitude and influence of a very large proportion of the poorly endowed and poorly educated Protestant clergy." It is not, however, preparation in the scholastic sense alone, but personality plus preparation that the times demand. Sanity, sincerity, passion—or why not take Paul's list, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control?—these are the indispensable elements that must be combined to create for the churches an invincible leadership. Men who are to interpret the spiritual meaning of life, mediate the sense of unseen realities, cure sick souls, and herald the coming of the kingdom, must be more than ordinary men in natural gifts and in divine grace. The church must produce them or its cause is lost.

On the Pacific coast in the autumn of 1930 the Congregational churches held a congress for the purpose of considering the relation of the churches to the conditions in modern life that are most challenging. "Conform or transform" was the central theme. In

straightforward fashion this congress confessed that we have been influenced by the prevalent materialism of modern life, and have allowed ourselves to be conformed to it. A valuation of property above personality, a cult of nationalism that breeds war, and tendencies of thought that develop attitudes of cynicism and pessimism, are characteristics of our times. Not only must the church face the facts squarely and unflinchingly, it must accept its due share of blame for them. Recognizing the gigantic proportions of the modern opponents of the Christian life, this church congress affirmed the indispensability of religion, and declared its conviction that only the teachings of Jesus can give to the human heart satisfying answers to its ultimate questions. From no other source than the Christian religion can there come either the vision or the dynamic that will make men sharers with God in the creation of his kingdom on earth. Only an heroic church membership, divinely discontented with present conditions, refusing any longer to conform, and setting itself steadily to the task of making Christian our unredeemed business and racial and international relations, has any hope of success. Little wonder, in the presence of such a conception of conditions in the church and in society, that this congress issued a resounding call for leadership open-minded and courageous, a leadership that will withstand the lure of comfort and position, that will rethink and react to the

basic concepts of Jesus, and that will express itself intelligently and vigorously in appropriate social action.

Better Membership

Another major requirement is better membership. The annual losses suffered through erasure of names of those who simply allow their membership to lapse is fairly staggering. The Springfield survey showed that for every ten persons added to the membership of the Protestant churches, seven disappear and one-third of the lost are unaccounted for. Approximately one-third of the annual gain in church membership is thus cancelled, quite apart from losses by death and transfer. The St. Louis survey shows conditions still worse. For every hundred members gained by that city's churches during a ten-year period, seventy-six were lost. The losses from various causes were 10 per cent by death, 49 per cent by transfer, and 41 per cent unaccounted for. When we add the longer list of those who remain on the church rolls but whose lives are relatively fruitless so far as the work and worship of the church are concerned, we have gone far toward dividing our published membership by two.

The first essential of better membership is the addition to our own evangelism of certain elements in the evangelism of Jesus that are too often either feebly set forth by our work or absent from it. It is a common enough utterance to say that Christianity depends ulti-

mately upon a unique experience of God in the human soul. Every religion has its conception of a God with whom its adherents maintain some sort of relationship. Judaism, nearest to Christianity, has at its base a magnificent conception of God as creator, law-giver, protector, even savior. It has its saints who knew God: Enoch, who walked with God; Abraham, who was called God's friend; Moses, to whom God told his secrets; Isaiah, who saw the Lord in his glory. And yet we find Jesus saying this amazing thing: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son shall reveal him." Not one of these ancient worthies knew God in terms of intimate personal experience as Jesus did, and, as he significantly declares, as others may come to know God through him. Here is something new and altogether unique and central in the Christian religion. There is no doubt that Jesus conceived his chief task to be that of helping men to rethink God in terms of companionship and intimate filial fellowship.

The whole case for Christianity stands or falls with the reality of the experiences it asserts. If they are not valid and genuine, then Christianity is vain, a pitiful delusion. "This is eternal life, to know thee, the only true God," expresses something greater by far than the concern over whether one can read his title clear to mansions in the skies. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," is John's exult-

ant declaration. It was a very stinging title which Dr. L. P. Jacks gave to his book, *The Lost Radiance of the Christian Religion.* It hurt because the fact could not be denied that we have lost the radiance that early Christianity reflected. Bring men and women into living contact with the Father God, and their conversions will last and their lives will glow with spiritual beauty.

It is the business of evangelism to initiate men into this vital experience of God. The evangelism that would do this must be reverent; which means, among other things, that a good many current evangelistic methods and hymns must be either eliminated or radically revised. Evangelism must be vital; there is no place for the mechanical, the artificial, the conventional. It must be constructive and positive; no negative, uncertain evangel will produce what is desired. The evangelist himself must walk with God. "We have heard, we have seen with our eyes, we have looked upon; our hands have handled the word of life," said an old-time evangelist, the keynote of whose evangel was, "Truly we have fellowship with the Father." It is to be remembered, too, that salvation is character—not escape but achievement, not getting let off by the high court of heaven, but being let into the very life of God. "Ye shall be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect," that simple and direct utterance of Jesus, indicates his faith in what salvation means. Nothing short of Godlikeness would satisfy him. This

is a long process, but it is the business of evangelism to start it.

The direct bearing of evangelism on social action must be made more apparent. In the mind of Jesus there was no detachment between these two; he knew that the making of good men conditions the making of a good world, and that individual transformation is fundamental. But Jesus expects those who follow him to count it not a by-product of living but life's main concern to purify and strengthen every economic, industrial, political and cultural agency through which the common existence of men finds expression. How closely these conceptions are linked together in his thought is made evident by reading *John* 3:16-17. "Whosoever believeth" is intensely personal and evangelistic. "That the world through him might be saved" is intensely social and just as evangelistic. Even taking the classic utterance on regeneration, it is not as a condition of entering heaven that Jesus proclaims the necessity of new birth—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Without personal spiritual transformation a man cannot grasp, cannot appreciate, the implications, the demands, the glories of the kingdom of heaven on earth. The "old gospel" for which men plead is in reality a social gospel. "And Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom." Surely this is the oldest gospel, the gospel of a new social order. When that truth is seen more

clearly, evangelism is bound to become more realistic and courageous. We shall then be appreciably nearer the realization of our home mission goal.

An evangelism that sets out deliberately to link those whom it wins to the living God, to create in them a deep concern for Godlike character, to send them out with passion and power not only to capture individuals for God but to reconstruct every social relationship, will naturally be followed up by effective processes of nurture. It will recognize that winning men to Christ is the first law of the kingdom, but that there is a second like unto it—building men in Christ. Evangelistic and educational processes will thus become one and inseparable.

Better Churchmanship

A third major requirement for the churches and an urgent one is better churchmanship. It is often said that our unhappy political and civic conditions are due not to bad people but to the bad citizenship of good people. It is likewise true that the moral and spiritual dearth that we so greatly deplore today is not so much due to bad people outside the church as to the bad churchmanship of good people inside the church. The empty pews that dishearten a minister, depress the worshipers, and impress the casual visitor with the feebleness of religious interest, could in most cases be filled without the addition of a single person outside the

membership. The empty treasuries that make support of church activities difficult and make progress impossible, and that furnish a frequent topic for humorous quips, a loyal churchmanship would be prompt to replenish. These things are too painfully obvious to require elaboration. Increase in good churchmanship will prove to be all that is needed to invigorate the majority of dormant churches.

Our attention turns to some cooperative aspects of churchmanship that are involved in the home mission of the churches. Parochialism is our deadly foe. Write Ichabod over the portals of any church in which interest centers on the local institution and its affairs, for surely its glory has departed. Good churchmanship means willingness to share in the city-wide, state-wide, nation-wide, worldwide work of the brotherhood. Good churchmanship is intelligent. It reads and helps circulate the periodicals of the church, and books that carry thought and inspiration from the hearts and pens of its leaders. It conducts schools of missions, forms mission study classes, calls to its aid missionaries and missionary leaders, in order that by all means it may intelligently and sacrificially share in providing the well-trained young men and women, the money, the volume of prayer and the sympathetic interest so necessary to the morale of the whole enterprise.

Good churchmanship is cooperative churchmanship.

Go back for a moment to the Brooklyn church whose fortunes we were reviewing. Within what would legitimately be called its immediate field in the present state of the population are two other churches of the same communion. One of these is a combination of two small churches. Had the equity in the properties of this combination been used to endow the older church, and the members been added to its membership, the present problem would have been met at least in part. Instead of pursuing this course, the combining churches sold one piece of property to business interests and the other to a Negro congregation, and bought new property on which the present church is located, four-fifths of a mile from the central church. In addition, this neighborhood contains two other large churches, one of them the largest of its communion in the country, the other the second largest church of another communion, and a dozen other Protestant churches with treasured traditions and honored history. The Springfield survey indicated the same need of a better strategy. In asserting that Protestantism in Springfield had "a fighting chance," the surveyors declared: "Furthermore, the survey is compelled to conclude that the chance of success is conditional. It can be attained only through cooperation. Such cooperation is the pivotal factor in any effective action in view of the survey's discoveries." Here in both these instances are good people and bad churchmanship.

Let us appraise the chief activities of the churches in the light of the demand for cooperation, making full allowance for freedom and denominational loyalty.

What Churches May Do, Apart and Together

Of course any church would list public worship as one of its major functions. Some would make it almost the sole function. However limited the range of its activities, no church would count itself a church if congregational worship were not included. In support of this emphasis on the value of worship, one has both the practice of our Lord and the clear implication of Paul that Christ can be fully known only in a comprehensive fellowship. Paul prays that the saints at Ephesus "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ." And resting upon this high scriptural authority and experience is the long history of the church, with its continuing testimony to the importance of worship as glorifying God and vitalizing men.

There is something about worship, even social worship, that is so intimate, and something in us that is so dependent upon its atmosphere and spirit and expression, that we cannot insist upon uniformity beyond the point at which the highest values of worship appear. Furthermore, we dare not demand uniformity lest we preserve the form only to discover that the

spirit has departed. Evelyn Underhill has made the suggestion that we should not simply tolerate but should encourage variety in worship: "Were we truly reasonable human beings, we should perhaps provide openly and as a matter of course within the Christian frame widely different types of ceremonial religion, suited to different levels of mind and different developments of the religious consciousness. To some extent this is already done; traditionalism and liberalism, sacramentalism, revivalism, quietism, have each their existing cults. But these varying types of church now appear as competitors, too often hostile, and not as the complementary and graded expressions of one life, each having truth in the relative, though none in the absolute sense."

Dr. H. Paul Douglass in *The City's Church* reminds us of how the city's population, and consequently the city church's constituency, is made up of widely varying cultures. Whether or not we may prefer it, the city must have churches "to match the differences of the units of population. One must be reformed and one orthodox; one rich and one poor; one for town and one for gown; one white, one Negro; one for highbrows, one for down-and-outers. If a language difference is involved, there may be Swedish Lutheran, Danish Lutheran, Norwegian Lutheran, German Lutheran, and so on." This means, as is shown most strikingly, perhaps, in the case of Negro churches, that

there are many lines to be drawn within the limits of a single race: divisions, sectarian, temperamental, cultural, that produce churches of several types. The older Negro populations have churches in which newcomers from the country or from the South find no spiritual satisfaction. It is so with the earlier and later immigrant groups of whatever nationality, and scarcely less so with those who emigrate from American farms to cities, and who, finding the city church cold and formal, establish for themselves churches that are essentially rural in spirit and method.

The place of the individual in worship, and the values that the act is expected to convey to personal life, must condition its form and manner so as to allow large liberty for a group that very properly desires, as the old phrase has it, to worship God in accordance with the dictates of their own conscience. If one congregation finds God through silence and simplicity, and another through the forms of an elaborate ritual, who shall say nay to either? If the intellectual or emotional quality of worship as demanded by one group is meaningless or repellent to another, we merely do a disservice to both by compelling them habitually to worship together. Clearly here is a problem for which no easy solution will suffice. Whatever expression of church unity may evolve tomorrow will make provision for varying tastes and temperaments and cultures, at least in social worship.

Nevertheless, when all has been said that may be said in defense of justifiable variety in forms of worship, even by those who serve the same God, the plea for cooperation and unity in worship becomes increasingly insistent. There is something inherent in worship itself which suffers when unity is denied. Surely the Father God in whose honor we bow is pleased when rich and poor meet together to acknowledge him who is the Maker of them all. Surely the spirit of Jesus is gladdened when, beyond and above all questions of form or phrase, the hearts of men rejoice together in their common fellowship with one another and with him. Surely it is possible, if we care enough about it and seek it earnestly enough, to find a common basis of fellowship in worship, deeper and more permanent than all the superficial and temporary differences of form and caste and culture. It is common experience that the sense of far-ranging fellowship that embraces believers of all lands and even of all generations, lifts the soul to loftier heights than it may find within narrower limits. In our local communities, where, as increasingly happens in these days, we ignore denominational lines for common worship, we find a thrill of the possibilities of brotherhood that remains long after the congregation has dispersed. Such an expression of faith in a common Christ, of trust in a Father God, of concern for the kingdom of heaven on earth, is testimony, too, for those outside the household

of faith, testimony which becomes as effective in commending our Christianity as the separateness and sectarianism of the past has been pathetically effective in discrediting it.

Another function of the church besides worship which is all but universally recognized is evangelism. Evangelistic methods differ greatly, as do the evangelistic message and aim. Here again, as in worship, complete standardization is both impossible and undesirable. Christian cooperation and unity are furthered by recognizing that limitations of tradition and conviction and prejudice do exist, instead of by trying to ignore their existence. Whether or not men ought to respond to a single interpretation of the gospel, the simple fact is that they do not do so. The building up of church membership will proceed most satisfactorily if there is frank recognition of varying religious types. Here as everywhere, here perhaps especially, it is true that "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." But here again the testimony of the church has been sadly weakened by the divisive and competitive spirit. Attached to the oft-quoted prayer of our Lord for the unity of his disciples was the impressive reason, "that the world may believe." Little attention would be given, Jesus could foresee, to the testimony of a divided, sectarian church. As to the correctness of this spiritual insight, the centuries bear witness and the times wax eloquent.

Our evangelism is pathetically ineffective today. And the chief count in the indictment relates not to the number of alleged conversions but to their quality. Few, comparatively, of those who are enrolled in the church give effective help to Jesus in establishing his kingdom, and many are lost even to the church itself. The remedy will be found, as we have elsewhere said more at length, through a restudy of the evangelism of Jesus. By that standard something is lacking in our own evangelistic processes. Spiritual renewal that was not satisfied with escape from life but found expression through life; acceptance of the way of the cross, as well as its redemptive grace and comfort; and a passion for the kingdom of heaven on earth, here and now—these were vital elements in the evangelism of Jesus. And they involve not a shred of sectarian interest or concern.

To recover and employ the evangelism of Jesus in a large way is not within the province of any exclusive church or group of churches. His evangelism has a universal quality which must find expression through expansive forces; it is stifled in a sectarian atmosphere. Our evangelism has not really expected to reach the community with the appeal of Christ and his gospel, has not commonly tried or aimed to do so. More or less isolated congregations add to their membership year by year such of their own children as they can, and a few others from outside homes through the medium of the Sunday school, as well as an occasional adult

with whom some contact has been established. What is needed to be done, and what we shall do when we are indeed earnest, involves a joint approach of all the churches to the whole community. The residents all have dwelling places, and it is entirely practicable in all but the most exceptional communities to develop a common strategy through which every dwelling is located and every family placed under the spiritual care of some church. The inspirational and educational work required to carry forward the evangelistic process, as well as the technical work required in making the preparatory survey, is best done cooperatively. The effective evangelism is that of the churches approaching together the community as a whole.

Again, the work of religious education is everywhere recognized as a basic task of the church. It is a rare church and a hopeless one that does not have some sort of Sunday school or its equivalent. Here also it is futile to expect uniformity. Certainly so long as radical differences of opinion exist as to what Christianity is and how the Bible is to be interpreted, large latitude will be required not only in the choice of educational materials but also in the determining of educational aims.

And here again the angels weep over our failure and the tragic losses that ensue. By national tradition and conviction we are committed in America, for a long time to come, to the policy of making the church and

the home bear the responsibility for religious education. To reduce and ultimately to banish illiteracy from its citizenship, the state and the people as citizens cheerfully vote hundreds of millions of dollars. To banish spiritual illiteracy the state is committed to give nothing, and the people as church members give comparatively paltry sums. And here again no common strategy has obtained. In the good old days when mother used to keep a cookie jar, she employed a process which up to a certain point we have followed in religious education. When the dough had been prepared and rolled flat, there was the interesting work of cutting out the cookies; down went the cookie cutter and out came a cookie. But when the cutter had done its work, a generous amount of the luscious material still remained in the interstices between circles. Of course mother never thought of throwing that away, but gathered it up and rolled it and cut it out again into its full capacity of cookies. We employ the cookie-cutter method in religious education. Each church and Sunday school cuts out its own cookie. By a large exercise of charity, let us assume that every cookie is a good one. But the interstices—about as much good raw material gets left out as gets included. There is no serious attempt in most communities to provide for the children, young people, and older people, too, whom our cookie-cutter method misses. It will be different tomorrow, and it is beginning to be different today.

The call for a common strategy in religious education is becoming so clamant that it is bound to be heard and heeded.

Dr. Arthur K. Getman, chairman of the Bureau of Agricultural Education of the New York State Department of Education, pleads for the creation of central schools of religious education in hundreds of the smaller villages of the state. This would mean the merging of separate Sunday and week-day schools. It would make possible the pooling of resources, the provision of trained consecrated teachers, and the development of the community spirit among boys and girls who go to public school together and play together, but who must find their separate ways to church and Sunday school. Dr. Getman believes that a "focusing of effort and talent of the Protestant churches upon the common problem of Christian education for the entire community, will bring results in this field that will compare favorably with the achievements that come from the centralization of funds and efforts in the public schools."

There is an immensely important group of church activities in the field of social work. While many object, and properly, to the substitution of social service for personal religion, it is hard to understand how any follower of Jesus can be indifferent to the urgent and far-reaching demands which his spirit and teachings make on the church for social ministry. An adequate

social program for the churches involves not only first aid to the injured and palliative remedies for social ills, but also diagnosis of and righteous protest against social wrongs, and positive contribution to social reconstruction. It is in this field, perhaps, that the churches are feeblest. It requires wisdom and courage and faith and patience, all gifts of the spirit indeed, to fulfill an effective social ministry, and here most of all are we weakened by our divisions. Social Christianity deals with issues and tasks that involve no sectarian principle or conviction. Especially in this very field of social reconstruction is collective effort required. In the presence of federated vice and exploitation and political corruption, divided moral forces are feeble. Whether in the home town or in a home mission community, interchurch cooperation is an ultimate requirement if we are not to exhaust our effort in sentimental sympathy or feeble gesture. Christian churches can make an effective impact upon social conditions wherever there are courageous Christians who will go forward together in the spirit of Jesus. Community needs will not in the future cry out to heaven against the churches. Through united social action the churches' present impotency will have become power.

Thus the ultimate success of home missions is conditioned upon good churches with good members and good churchmanship. And here, in brief, is the church for which we wait, the church that will send forth and

support missionaries, and that, whether self-supporting or aided, will be a missionary center. It is the church of the warm heart, of the open mind, of the adventurous spirit; the church that cares; that heals hurt lives, that comforts old people, that challenges youth, that knows no divisions of culture or class, and no frontiers, geographical or social; the church that inquires as well as affirms, that looks forward as well as backward; the church of the Master, the church of the people; the high church, the broad church, the low church, high as the ideals of Jesus, broad as the love of God, low as the humblest human; a working church, a worshiping church, a cooperating church; a church that interprets the truth in terms of its own times and challenges its own times in terms of the truth; that inspires courage for this life and hope for the life to come; a church for all men, the church of the living God.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT MAY HAPPEN TO CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA?

THE familiar dictum of George Eliot (if it was she who said it), "Prophecy is a gratuitous form of folly," might well warn us against the futility of attempting to forecast the future of American Christianity. Certainly precise prediction is not possible, although insight gives a degree of foresight. Of one tribal group of ancient Hebrews it was said that they "had understanding of their times to know what Israel ought to do"—a combination of idealistic vision and practical judgment which is a major need of our times. There has been no better definition of the prophetic spirit. The great prophets of Israel were in this respect peculiarly gifted. They were men of keen political sagacity and marked moral statesmanship, who started from an established moral base-line: God is powerful and just, he rules the world in righteousness, his laws have ultimate authority, his will is invincible. By this standard of righteous purpose and judgment Israel's life was tested. Says Amos in Jehovah's name, "With a plumb-line I test my people. . . . Let justice flow down like waters and righteousness as a mighty

stream." And Isaiah, "Justice will be the saving of Zion." Micah declares that Jehovah's demands are simple, "to do justly and to love kindness and to walk humbly with God." The Prophet of the Exile is sure of divine judgment and equally sure of divine mercy.

Facing Facts Frankly

On this basis we, too, may dare to be a bit prophetic. In bringing to a conclusion our discussion of home missions in the modern world, we may well seek to discover the significant trends in our principles and practice. If we can do this we shall be able to forecast the future with some degree of accuracy, and to find aid in developing the practical measures required. Under the influence of the social challenge of the gospel under modern conditions, something so significant is happening to home missions that its best friends do not always readily recognize what this something is. The larger home missions is emerging, and none too soon. We here lay aside entirely the distinction between home missions as carried forward by mission boards and by local congregations. It is all one.

A major prophet of our own time has spoken, Walter Rauschenbusch. He too had a moral base-line from which his measurements were made—Jesus' idea of the kingdom of God, in which the claims of personality and service to brotherliness are paramount. Walter Rauschenbusch was sure, as was Peter, that "there is

none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Christ is not inevitable because the scriptures so declare; the scriptures assert the necessity of Christ's way of life because there is no other effective or even safe way of operating a world of men. This prophet believed with John that "the world [the selfish social order] passeth away"; it is inevitable that it should perish; and by these standards he forecast the future: "It rests with us to say if we are now to enter upon a new era in the transformation of the world into the kingdom of God, or if our civilization is destined to go down to the graveyard of dead civilizations, and God will have to try once more." This is not the complaint of a pessimist, it is the plea of an unhappy seer who is facing the facts and frankly reporting and appraising them. To think that a selfish civilization can ultimately survive is to question the rule of God, whose own nature, loving and wise and just, is the sure and abiding pledge that no such calamity can befall. For dire calamity it would be. It were better that humanity itself should perish from the earth than that a hard and cruel civilization, perpetuating itself by war and exploitation, should by its triumph vindicate its right to survive. Home mission theory and practice must be revised to meet these crucial problems of the relation of civilization and religion.

Sometimes we wonder what may happen to Ameri-

can civilization. If it will not renounce self-aggrandizement, with militarism and all its works; if its ethical ideals are benumbed by prosperity; if it worships at the altars of materialism and sets success above service; if it heeds not the cry of the underprivileged; if it cannot confirm its liberty in law—then it will follow the old civilizations to oblivion. Or again, we wonder what may happen to American Christianity. If it has not the keenness of vision to discern the signs of the times, and lacks the courage of Christ to declare the gospel of the kingdom; if it cannot see that this is a day of visitation in which the kingdom has come near, and if it drifts with the current of the pagan philosophies of the world; if it sets material expansion above spiritual growth and puts success before service—then it must hear the pitiful lips of its Master say as of old that the kingdom of heaven is taken away and given to those who will produce its fruits. We dare not ignore this solemn possibility in a fatuous optimism like that of Jeremiah's generation. "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," they cried, supposing that the stones of the temple had some special sanctity, and that its daily sacrifices had magical efficacy to turn God's hand and heart from care for justice and goodness. Not so, said Jeremiah; change your ways, establish justice and mercy and charity in your social life, or the very temple itself will fall with Jerusalem in a day of judgment that swiftly comes. Indeed, said

Hosea, Israel's very enthusiasm for institutional religion runs hand in hand with irreligion. "Many an altar has Israel raised, altars that only serve for sin. . . . Israel forgot his Maker and built temples"—a poor substitute, this, for a spiritual religion.

We have been talking about what has happened and about what may happen. The word happen is not used as implying irrational processes. Nothing will happen by magic or good luck or chance to guarantee a happy destiny for America. Moral and spiritual progress is not inevitable, as a generation ago we were supposing it to be. We have been rudely awakened from that pleasant dream. Civilization is not on a moving escalator on its way to the top. The things that will take place tomorrow will be the fruitage of yesterday's sowing and today's cultivation. Happily there are trends that justify a generous measure of hopefulness. If they continue, good things are bound to result.

Christianity will become more courageous in dealing with social questions. The Christian message for America will recover the emphasis made by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount; it must do so. Any fair statement of this message would certainly include as essential these three principles:

Hold every human personality in the same high respect in which you desire that others hold you.

Make love the law of your life in every relationship with others.

Seek the common good rather than personal advantage and privilege.

Presumably all Christians are committed to every one of these principles of the Christian life. But what do such principles require of us when we face questions like the following?

Should practices of race discrimination be abolished in the conduct of colleges, normal schools, and other institutions supported by Christian philanthropy or public money? Would you sell your house to one of another race if you knew that in so doing you would lower the value and contentment of your neighbors' homes? Is it right to move away from a neighborhood where you are needed for the sake of living among more congenial people? Should the church receive members without regard to racial or cultural differences?

Should Christians tolerate an economic order that enables some people to control vast wealth they have not earned, while others live in actual poverty or under economic conditions which deprive them of opportunity for fuller life and development? What is to be said of an economic system that allows industry to absorb the surplus earnings of its employees in prosperous periods, and to cast them aside when their labor is no longer profitable? Does the gospel of Christ have any bearing on such tragic facts as face us in a financial depression? Is the profit system in

industry Christian? Should workers share in the processes and profits of industry?

Will a Christian employer refuse to employ child labor? Is the hiring and promotion of employees a matter of only individual concern? Will a Christian employer refuse to confer with strikers? Is it right for workers who are Christians to ally themselves with organizations whose principles include the strike and picketing? Sabotage? What shall the church do when its members become involved in such questions? Are members properly concerned with the questions only when that contingency arises?

Can a Christian ever support or engage in war? What about supporting and helping to win war and still not bearing arms? Should a nation seek its own material advantage at the expense of other nations? Should the church take a corporate stand on political questions, whether of war or peace, that seem to it to involve vital moral issues?

These are all fundamentally missionary problems, even though they may not at first appear so. We have not yet found the answers to most of them, nor are we likely to do so without vastly harder thought and braver action. If we throw up our hands in despair at the difficulty of finding our way through such a maze, the kingdom of heaven is not for us; it is for men of greater daring. A fearless faith will attack every one of these problems; the new home missions

will grapple with them; the unconquerable spirit of Christ will solve them all.

Speaking Out about Sin

It has been said that there needs to be a revival of preaching against sin. Before that revival begins, the preachers participating in it should reread the teachings of Jesus about sin. The sins that Jesus especially denounced were those of the respectable sinners—hypocrisy, selfishness, contempt, snobbishness, prejudice. Dives was in hell not for blaspheming God but for despising man. Those on the left hand were there not by reason of defective creed but by reason of defective conduct. Jesus condemned sins against fellowship. Let the Christian protest against sin be heard and continue to be heard, but let it be as discriminating as was the protest of Jesus. We purpose to destroy those social sins that are not commonly recognized as exceeding sinful, but which are in reality the supreme obstacle to the coming of the kingdom. Jesus had visioned a world which would be free from any barriers of race and class and culture that might divide humanity. To create this world is the task of all who would be identified with his teaching, and especially is it the task and province of home missions.

There has been a terrible misunderstanding about Christianity or we should not now have so many churches and so much religious activity at the same

time that social reconstruction is so slow. When Jesus said that men should seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, he was not only stating his ideal of personal life, he was setting forth the social ideal and making it the very heart of his gospel. Henceforth concern for the kingdom was to be central in the religion of all who truly followed him. The inadequacy of the church's apprehension of its own gospel can be discovered by anyone who searches the creeds, the hymns, the prayers, the dominant interests of the churches, ancient and modern. Strange to say, that which, from reading the gospels, one would expect to find central in Christianity receives commonly only minor or indirect mention, if indeed it escapes being utterly ignored. Much of the brave teaching of Jesus is annulled by the lack of social passion that characterizes our timid and uncertain acceptance of Christ. "I send you out as sheep among wolves." Men will seek to kill you, thinking that they are doing God service. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Those who follow Jesus must take their lives in their hands in a selfish world.

And yet it comes to pass, strangely enough, that exponents of the Christian religion are often the least responsive to the social challenge of its founder, the least sympathetic with those who are in revolt against an economic system which is at the basis of the unjust

social order. The evangelism of Jesus has always called for an adventurous faith. It is not hard to believe that God can take us to a happy heaven and keep us there in eternal bliss. It is not hard even to believe that some day God will change this world into a heavenly kingdom by his great power. But the faith of Jesus to which we are called is very different and much more difficult. It is the faith that God is changing the world into the kingdom here and now, as fast as he can find men and women of vision and passion. Like their Master, in the assurance that love is mightier than hate, these followers of his will even set their faces toward the cross in protest against individual and social wrong. It is faith, not "belief in spite of evidence, but life in scorn of consequences," as Professor Kirsopp Lake puts it, which the church is to inspire and initiate. Christianity can be made a heroic adventure. It was the courage of Peter and John that led the people to take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Such faith and courage are inevitably involved in accepting the consequences of Christian discipleship. All the activities of home missions are feeble and ineffective until the full implications of the Christian gospel are acknowledged and expressed. We are glimpsing this today. It will be inescapably clear tomorrow.

Home mission leaders see this and are courageously declaring it. Hear the challenging words of the Washington congress:

Home missions has an inescapable responsibility in relation to the application of Christianity to current life problems. The exceptional difficulties under which many of our fields are laboring in this year of business depression accentuates the responsibility in the field of economic well-being. We believe our home mission boards should take the leadership in summoning Christian people to shape the economic structure of American life in accordance with Christian ideals. It is not enough to deal with economic crises as they occur. So far as in us lies, we must take measures to prevent their occurrence and to guarantee to all our people an opportunity to achieve a Christian standard of living. . . . We cannot hope to make religion regnant in our cities without challenging the forces which limit personality.

The still greater courage needed to deal with the churches' own social shortcomings is awakening:

We believe that the segregation of racial groups in separate ecclesiastical or administrative units, while frequently necessary and desirable as a temporary expedient, is not desirable as a permanent policy. Rather, the uniting of diverse elements in the same religious units is an important contribution to the ultimate development of genuine national unity on the basis of Christian faith.

When the subject concerns what the city asks of the church, how wisely this statement blends the personal and mystical with the social aspects of the Christian religion:

A new technique for personal living;
More intimate attention to home and family life;
A new philosophy of life and of vital religion, inter-

preted through great and courageous preaching and a program of adult education which will relate men and women actively as Christians to a new world environment;

Education in religion for its child life and youth, leading to a personal relation to God in Christ;

The occasion and urge for worship, for quiet, repose, stillness, and the integration of life with God;

Wholesome fellowship in a group life inspired by unselfish purpose, cheered by play.

To save the city from its provincialism, wider horizons through vital sharing in the national and international life and the worldwide missionary undertaking of the church.

Identification of the purpose of the church with civic progress and the underlying questions of social reconstruction.

A great new hope arises that tomorrow will be different.

A more manifest unity of the churches in their missionary work is on the way. Already enough evidence has been cited to show the strong trend in this direction. Even now we enjoy a generous measure of spiritual unity and practical cooperation. There is no place for pessimism at this point. On the contrary, one finds abundant grounds for gratitude. Recall again the trends toward larger cooperation and unity in home mission work which we noted in Chapter Four. Think of the innumerable instances of community churches and other community cooperation throughout the country. Estimate the far-reaching influence of the home and foreign interdenominational missionary organizations

and conferences, days of prayer, institutes, schools of missions, study classes. Recall the effect upon young people of such influences as Christian Endeavor and the Missionary Education Movement, whose ministries have been so strongly on the side of fraternal fellowship. Add to this the effect of the cooperative movements in religious education and in college and university Christian activities, and one sees how impossible it has become for the majority of the young people of today to tolerate a narrow sectarianism. Note the relative disappearance from the pulpit of emphases upon distinctively denominational points of view. From the sermons preached one could not often discover the preacher's denomination. Other aspects of public worship tend strongly in the same direction. We have already gone a long way toward the realization of the kind of unity most needed and most desired. These quiet and effective forces are operating in the churches everywhere.

The Evangelical Alliance, the American Tract Society, the American Bible Society, the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, the interdenominational Sunday school movement, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and many of the other organizations which arose during the nineteenth century, bear a twofold witness, along with missionary effort, that there is a rising tide of protest against an intolerant sectarianism, and that through such organi-

zations a growing spirit of Christian fellowship is functioning, at least in fractional ways.

But something further emerges. The question of how much unification of the church is desirable and possible, and how it may be achieved, has already become insistent. While the need of cooperation in missionary work is already beginning to be met, its full realization waits upon a better expression of unity in the local churches and in the church as a whole. The unifying of subordinate activities in missionary and educational and philanthropic work is furthering the larger unity of the churches, but clearer vision and more courageous action are required on the part of the controlling bodies, local and state and national. But that, too, increases more and more. And missions are helping mightily to create the very unity on which their ultimate success depends.

The cooperative achievements of home missions recorded in these pages are in the aggregate very considerable, but they hold far larger promise for the days ahead. Not only the addresses but the official actions of the Home Missions Congress are vibrant with this conviction and expectation. Says Dr. William R. King, Secretary of the Home Missions Council: "Cooperation was the big word in the congress. Each of the thirteen conference groups, in discussing the various subjects assigned them, found itself coming round again and again to the subject of cooperation. The problems in

every field of home missions are demanding a finer teamwork." And Dr. Charles L. White, conference president: "We look forward to the day when all the Protestant home mission boards of North America will heartily unite with the boards represented in this congress in a resolute endeavor to coordinate all our home mission work."

The Rev. Edmund deS. Brunner forecast the line of procedure by which high comity ideals will become realities: "We should plan for a definite effort to carry statements of principles, definitions and procedures down to the smaller ecclesiastical units for their acceptance and understanding, in order to create support on the part of the church constituency for comity and cooperation. . . . There must be a change of attitude among the rank and file of clergy and administrators. Too long the defensive shield of organizational prestige has shut out the rays of the sun of Christian tolerance and cooperation."

Said Dr. John R. Mott from the depths of a spirit profoundly stirred: "In every hour during this creative gathering we must have heard the summons to a larger unity. Never have the divisions among Protestant Christians at home and abroad seemed to me to be so unnecessary, so unwise and therefore so unchristian, as they do just now. . . . The difficulty of the undertaking . . . necessitates on our part a genuine spiritual solidarity and visible unity."

The congress in its official utterances rose to meet the new challenge in far-reaching declarations of ideal and purpose. It urged the boards, in cooperation with the Home Missions Council, to consider carefully what types of service and specialized activity can be done most effectively if they are done jointly, either through the Home Missions Council or by direct cooperation among themselves. It urged the Council to take up with the boards the importance of making at once a careful analysis of all their aided fields to determine to what extent these fields are competitive. It asserted once more its conviction "that the time has come to eliminate competition in home missions," and declared itself "unequivocally opposed to the use of mission funds for the maintenance of competitive enterprises." It requested that where the principles of comity recognized by the Home Missions Council are ignored by the representatives of any denomination, a full record of such cases be placed on file with the Council with the understanding that they be circulated in the Council's bulletins and reports and perhaps given wider publicity. It asserted its conviction that "the time has come and the opportunity is at hand for passing from the 'resolution stage' to the 'action stage,'" and concluded its findings with this significant paragraph:

Moreover, beyond all this we commend every effort to bring a divided Protestantism into closer unity of thought

as well as into wider harmony of action. We therefore follow with prayerful interest the efforts of several closely related communions to effect a closer union, and accept all this as a token of the wider unity toward which this common Christian experience and these united efforts clearly tend, all in fulfillment of the prayer of our Lord.

Forward through Federation

The most superficial observer of American church life discovers a new and important development in the rise and rapid progress during the first quarter of the twentieth century of the movement for church federation. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and the state and local councils of churches intimately though not organically related to it, constitute a new type of interdenominational medium through which our churches are integrating their life and work with increasing promise of a new and better day for the Christian enterprise and for America. This movement, while seeking the largest spiritual unity and the fullest interchurch cooperation, is equally concerned to preserve such essential convictions and practices of the several churches as have had and continue to have spiritual value for any group, large or small. During nearly a quarter of a century the Federal Council and the federations or councils of churches that have sprung up in scores have been developing a technique of practical cooperation, as a result of which the churches have been working together upon common

tasks that were quite too large and too difficult for accomplishment in any other way.

Most of the largest cities of America now have church federations with full-time secretaries and a considerable staff, and a still larger number of smaller cities have federations with volunteer leadership. In several of the states there are organizations with full-time secretarial service, and in many more states some sort of state organization exists under volunteer leadership. The activities carried on by these federations are numerous and varied.

One may feel quite sure that there must be vast significance in such varying conceptions of the life and work, the meaning and mission, of the church as have divided Christendom in the past and still prevent a common agreement. But we are privileged to rejoice in the existence of a substantial basis of shared conviction, sufficient to carry forward an extensive common program. And faith sees something here that promises even better things. What these cooperative home mission activities and these cooperative church organizations actually are, as an expression of the essential unity of the churches, is even more important in its implications than what they do.

The problem of the extension of cooperation, in large areas or small, is that of putting a larger, fuller content into the meaning of the enterprise. Too often a federation is treated or even resented as just another society,

an outside cause asking support. There will be readier response when we discover that a federation is a simplified expression of the common life of the churches themselves, and that through it they can do together with deeper force things that are now either done separately or, which is more likely, not done at all. The demand for a completer expression of Christian unity has become so insistent, indeed, that there are many who would rise with enthusiasm to the call for it. For them the experience of cooperation itself has developed desires and expectations that go beyond it. Beyond cooperative federation, then, is what?

The survey by the Institute of Social and Religious Research which dealt intimately with a score of these federations declared that "the current movement of organized Protestant cooperation impresses one as having extraordinary vitality and promise. . . . Certainly no other movement rivals the federations in their direct and practical attack upon the evils of the divided church."[1] This movement has come a long way in a short time; it has vitality; it promises much for the future of American Christianity and thus for American life. But this same survey challenges as well as cheers us. The federation movement "is not profound enough," the record reads, "for the ends which it seeks. . . . The movement succeeds on practical levels

[1] *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities,* by H. Paul Douglass.

by the utilization of naïve impulses and the avoidance of major difficulties, not primarily because of penetrating thought or high courage and leadership." Serious question as to the future of federation is raised by the "failure of the federation movement to find, and indeed its very avoidance of any attempt to find, a basic philosophic and religious groundwork for itself. Such an attitude was perhaps excusable at the outset. . . . But such an attitude ought to be inconceivable as a permanent policy and is no longer tenable." Much more courageous churchmanship is called for if the challenge of the conclusion of this competent and painstaking research is to be met: "Perhaps it [the movement] has reached the limit of its growth with its present depth of soil. Very likely it must now become much more than it is or else much less."

How are we to realize the "much more" which is essential if the gains of the federation movement are to be conserved and made fruitful? While our missionary work is itself promoting unity, it needs to be undergirded by unity in the basic structure of the church itself. How much unification is possible? How much is enough?

A Formula for Union

Certainly we have not enough unity until it becomes impressive testimony to our common faith in our common Lord and Savior. Nor have we enough unity

until we are prepared to present the church as an instrument that is effective and competent for the accomplishment of the tasks of the kingdom of God. For how much visible unity does the prayer of Jesus plead? Who can tell? How much more effective would a single universal church organization be? Who knows? Let us build no fences across the road to unity by saying, "Thus far and no farther." It may well prove that enough unification to meet the ultimate demands of the Christian spirit would be far more than the state of our present religious life could bear. It takes a good deal of religion to keep a vast organization subject to the spirit of Christ. Institutions are necessary, but institutionalism is one of religion's deadly enemies.

It is fair to assert that our essential oneness in Christ must and will eventually be more fully and visibly expressed than it is now, and that this expression must be made in terms that will harmonize with his ideals. Both freedom and unity must be achieved and expressed. These two ideals are not exclusive, but beautifully complementary. Our aim must be liberty and union. When we become in fact a brotherhood, we may expect the world to believe in us as such, and in the Father whom we shall then more convincingly reveal.

More than two decades of practical experimentation have brought us squarely to this question: Does federa-

tion indicate a middle way, beyond mere cooperation but short of complete merger, by which liberty and union can alike be maintained, the churches and communions preserving their distinctive life and loyalty so long as they will, at the same time that through a central body they express their essential unity and perform their common tasks? Perhaps federation does not lead to this as an ultimate ideal. At any rate, if we are working in the right spirit, all of us who believe in some larger unity ought to be able to walk together on this road happily and confidently. Perhaps then we shall find the road itself leading us to the city of God.

Everything depends upon whether those who have a passion for unity and those who have an ineradicable love of liberty can walk together within the bounds of mutual respect and brotherly affection. To many students of current church life it would appear that federation, while itself an incomplete expression of real church union, may be its natural forerunner. Professors William Adams Brown, Douglass MacIntosh, and Clarence R. Athearn have all referred to the federal union of the commonwealths of the United States as an analogy of how church union may be achieved while liberty is stoutly defended and maintained. The federation idea in more or less modified form has been frequently employed in political life, as in the British commonwealth, the League of Nations, and the union of soviets of Russia, and is the central idea of such pro-

posed bodies as the United States of Europe and the Federation of the Indian States and Provinces. The imagination is kindled by this analogy with the nation. The thirteen American colonies were as independent of each other as any European states then or now. At the end of a hundred years of colonial history this policy of independence and isolation and even of antagonism had become intolerable. Without some coordination, some closer union, the colonies were quite unable to make common cause either in the defense of their liberties or in the conquest of the continent. But there were two great obstacles to any closer union: colonial jealousies, and the fear of an overhead government or superstate. These obstacles would have proved fatal to the union project but for the patience and persistence, the faith and the hope, of a very few men who were persuaded both of the futility of the present policy and of the practicability of union. Their problem was to secure unity without sacrificing liberty. The outcome of their years of patient study and earnest argument is recorded in that famous American document which begins, "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union." Through its instrumentality was created a federal union of sovereign states designed to secure what Daniel Webster named "liberty and union, one and inseparable, now and forever."

The problem of the churches today in respect to unity

does not greatly differ from the problem of the thirteen colonies. The medieval church achieved unity at the cost of liberty. The reformers secured liberty at the cost of unity. Unless the genius of our people should undergo a complete transformation, no formula for church union is likely ever to be acceptable that does not guarantee large liberty of thought and of method of organization. The abiding values of the Reformation are too highly esteemed, and our Christian liberties were purchased at too great a price, to make it possible to barter them away for what would prove a spurious unity. Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Real Christian unity is born of that spirit and can never be artificially induced.

It must be admitted at once that the political analogy we have cited is not perfect. For one thing, the state units are geographically separate, while the denominational units occupy a single field, although this would not seem to affect the case materially. A far more serious difference in the analogy arises at the point where a final authority is involved. It would be useless to propose a union of the churches that would be in any sense coercive, or from which the peaceable withdrawal of any group would be disallowed or such disaffection punished. To carry the political parallel to this point would be to bring back the old days of persecution. It is a question not of authority, as with the state, but of service. "Call no man lord," Jesus said. "He is the

greatest among you who is servant of all." The problem for the churches would not have to do with questions of worship or sacraments or denominational organization or authority over the consciences of men; all such questions would of necessity belong within the sphere of what in our political analogy are included in states' rights. The central organization would operate only in such fields of service as were recognized to be common to all, and for which it had received responsibility from the churches constituting the union. Certainly the effecting of a federal union of the churches could not be easily accomplished. There would need to be years and perhaps decades of patient experimentation before anything more than a tentative delimitation of spheres could be effected.

With the success that has attended our cooperative missionary activities and the federation movement through nearly a quarter of a century, it should not be difficult to take another step and achieve at least as much unification as is here proposed. The formula could be tried out in units of varying size—national, state, large city, small city, village. It is applicable not only geographically but functionally as well—home missions, foreign missions, state and city extension, education, ministerial relief, church building, general philanthropy, research. Whether such unification, falling short of loss of identity through complete merger as it does, would prove sufficient, time would tell. The

demand for a fuller expression of unity than we now have has become so insistent that we dare not ignore it.

The most disturbing single factor in the project of unifying the churches is not difference in doctrinal conviction, in ritual observance, or even in temperamental diversity; it is the claims exerted by institutionalism, parochialism. Loyalty to an organization stifles higher loyalties too often to make us exuberantly hopeful over a quick and easy victory. It may be a long journey yet to the fair country where such Christian cooperation and unity as we have been forecasting will find full expression, but we are moving. If not tomorrow, at least on the day after tomorrow, we will arrive.

Organized religion will be vitalized through a fresh experience of God. If the roots of our religious life do not go deeper into the nourishing life of God, it is futile to extend the branches further into larger social ministries. It means only collapse if we lengthen our cords and do not strengthen our stakes. Without more vitality, unity will be tragically disappointing. Large institutions are subject to temptations subtle and powerful which smaller ones often escape. The possession of power is a perilous experience. It is much easier to know how to be abased than to know how to abound. We dare not add together the organizational elements of the church unless we find increased spiritual resources. We do not even now possess spiritual power

enough to meet the requirements of our present ecclesiastical machinery. Our religion must and will be vitalized at the source, through such fresh experience of God.

The hopefulness with which we may greet the future of organized religion in America lies largely in a growing sense of the individual's need of God. We can have God in the abundance of his wisdom and power and love if we will. We have just about reached the point of saying that we will, that we must. Not alone through scripture do we assure ourselves that there is no other name. Every other door closes before us. Materialistic philosophies dismally expose their incapacity to answer the questions that perplex modern life. Commerce and industry and finance build a structure that appears to have the strength of centuries, but may have no more stability than a house of cards. Even the leaders of education confess confusion and the need to be reinspired in the search for truth.

Institutions of religion are not in better case. The churches claim a spiritual authority that they know not how to exercise; theologians and ecclesiasts wrangle; bewilderment paralyzes our lives. Where there is no vision the people perish. But what chance has spiritual vision amid the blazing artificial lights, or the still small voice among the raging noises of modern life? Joseph Fort Newton in *The New Preaching* has stated this problem impressively: "For better, for

worse—no doubt for both—we live in the age of the machine; and if we have not deeply pondered its meaning for religion, it is just because its haste and hum are so much with us. Yet, imperceptibly and increasingly, it profoundly influences the inner life of man, altering its rhythm until he is half ready to think himself a machine and nothing more. Wheels whirl about us, wings whir above us, hammers ring in our ears, furnaces pant in our faces, traffic roars through cities of steel and smoke; and what befalls the sensitive, wistful human soul in the midst of it all? To an accompaniment of high speed and hideous noise, the world goes at a killing gait which quickens every day, employing 'improved means to meet unimproved ends,' as Thoreau said; and it is well-nigh impossible for men to cultivate those arts and offices by which the soul is kept alive. Its drone and grind, its clash and clang and clatter invade the mind, and the still small voice is drowned in the jolt and jar and din. It is enough to tear the religiousness out of human nature, if such a thing were possible, and the wonder is that men have any inner life at all. Deafened by a bedlam of noise, driven by hurry, the folk in our pews do not find it easy to obey the old and wise injunction, so vital to our health of soul, 'Be still and know that I am God.' "

Facing reality with open eyes as we have tried to do, we may of necessity have disturbed the easygoing hopefulness of some of our readers. But hopefulness of this

sort needs to be disturbed, needs to be forced to find for itself a reasoned foundation. Even more dangerous to society than an exaggerated pessimism is a superficial optimism. But in point of fact our optimism is not of that kind. The history of Christianity abounds with evidences of the unquenchable vitality of the religion of Jesus. Again and again, in times of revolutionary change, conservative souls have been filled with fear, even to the point of panic. Great migrations, the entrance of new cultures into an older civilization, the revolutions in thought and in industrial conditions, the inevitable growing pains of social progress—all these have seemed to many honest believers to be presaging the collapse of religion. And always someone has appeared in such times to speak what Lynn Harold Hough has called "the heroic and reconciling word," and these fearful souls, taking fresh courage, have rallied to its call.

When the fulness of time had come in God's purposes, Jesus was born. A terrific conflict between old ideas and new, between legalism and liberty, threatened the church in its infancy, and Paul appeared. Again, the church was trembling under the impact of the barbarian invasion before which Rome was impotent, when Augustine arrived. The new freedom and the old authority were in deadly conflict in the sixteenth century and men's hearts were failing them, when Luther and Zwingli and Calvin and the Anabaptists

came to fulfill their diverse ministries, and the church went forward to new vantage ground. In the seventeenth century secularism captured the English mind, religion grew feeble, and Wesley's work was ready to be done. Who the great leader is to be for these new times does not yet appear. It is possible, with the advances made in knowledge and in freedom, that an outstanding single leader may not be required. In any case there need be no waiting on the part of Christians for the leadership they need to show them the way.

God is, Christ remains, the cross is still towering o'er the wrecks of time, the Holy Spirit is a living spirit. We are coming back to the truth as it is in Jesus, to satisfy our hunger and quench our thirst and to find rest and renewal in the eternal God. Without such an experience, all that we have talked about in this book is words and hopes, wishful thinking and nothing more. These pages have been written that we may understand more fully what is today and what may be tomorrow, and what there is for us to do to help make America truly Christian. The humblest student of home missions, as well as the noblest missionary and the wisest administrator, can contribute to the making of a fresh and mighty current that will sweep away the debris in America and fill to the banks the healing river of God.

The assembling of the convictions and ideals that produce the motive power of public opinion might be

likened to the gathering of the waters of the Mississippi. From the cluster of blue Minnesota lakes in which it rises it takes its winding and widening course to the sea. At first it appears characterized by beauty rather than strength, but it gathers volume as it flows, until at last it thrusts apart great commonwealths and requires mile-long bridges to span its breadth. It "seizes the hills in its hands, and drags them down to the ocean." In its lower reaches it is a very Hercules among rivers. Within its bounds it becomes a source of wealth to the nation and of blessing to the people who dwell along its banks. Breaking its bounds, it becomes the instrument of death and destruction. And as the Father of Waters thus flows with increasing volume from Minnesota to the Gulf, so flows the stream of conscience and spiritual enlightenment through our land. The time comes when it finds expression for good or evil in some public upheaval, or in the word or act of some political or business or other leader, who becomes for the moment the representative of the hopes or fears, the wisdom or folly, of the people. But remember this: the Mississippi would have no volume or power whether for construction or destruction, were it not for the Ohio and the Missouri and the White and the Arkansas that pour their lesser floods into its stream. And remember that these in their turn were made by scores of tributaries, which would have no water to send forth but for the thousands and tens of thousands

of contributing creeks and brooks like those by which many of us played in our childhood or which we still find in our summer days.

Just so the readers and students and author of this book, obscure folk though we may be and far upstream, are determining what currents shall flow and with what volume to strengthen or to enfeeble the spiritual power of America and of the world. It is slow work, developing a Christian conscience that will make race hatreds impossible and industrial exploitations unknown, that will remand war to the dark ages where alone it belongs and build the brotherhood of man; but this is what has to be done. Christ's way of changing the world provides a place for every one of us in a fellowship of common service through which his kingdom will come. Back of churches and schools and courts and governments are men and women, boys and girls, the very sources of those powerful moral and intellectual currents that flow through human life to refresh and transform it. Changed individuals change the world. And they do it by means of such simple everyday graces as love and good-will and brotherliness and teachableness. Each of us helps in one way or another to determine what shall happen tomorrow. To each of us the challenge of change in American life is a ringing call from God himself to share in a high and greatly rewarding spiritual adventure.

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